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ZAVRŠNI RAD  
**CONSUMER ATTITUDES TOWARD SUSTAINABLE PACKAGED  
BEAUTY PRODUCTS**

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NAIDA ROVČANIN

U skladu sa članom 54. Pravila studiranja za I, II ciklus studija, integrisani, stručni i specijalistički studij na Univerzitetu u Sarajevu, daje se

### **IZJAVA O AUTENTIČNOSTI RADA**

Ja, **Rovčanin Naida**, student/studentica drugog (II) ciklusa studija, broj index-a **5800-SBS76004** na programu **Menadžment**, smjer **Marketing na engleskom jeziku**, izjavljujem da sam završni rad na temu:

#### **CONSUMER ATTITUDES TOWARD SUSTAINABLE PACKAGED BEAUTY PRODUCTS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Sustainability as a very significant topic nowadays started to be in greater focus by countries around the world in order to reduce the effect of climate change, and to somehow preserve the planet Earth. As many new sustainable production methods began to emerge, one of them are sustainably packaged beauty products, which have recently become of great importance, especially considering that the majority of the population uses beauty products on a daily basis, some even more than once. Given that consumers are the ones who somehow decide whether to use something and how much, it is very important to examine their attitudes in order to gain insight into the consumer situation related to beauty products packaged in this way.

In this regard, the goal of this master's thesis is to examine the attitudes of consumers about sustainably packaged cosmetic products in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as factors that could influence their purchase of them, and to thereby obtain to some extent an overview of how much people are familiar with sustainability in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and how much it is represented there in general. As for the research methodology, qualitative research was chosen in the form of a semi-structured interview with citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina who belong to Generation Z and Millennials. Bosnia and Herzegovina was chosen as the country in which the research will be conducted. to be carried out primarily because this topic is very important and it is important to see the views of the citizens of the country in order to establish how much they are interested in it. Likewise, research on this topic has not yet been done in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and thus in some way a new contribution would be made and also a recommendation for future studies.

This master's thesis is based on Consumer Behaviour Theory from which personal factors (lifestyle, age, gender, and income) were taken for analysis to investigate the participants and to reveal their influence on the purchase of sustainably packaged cosmetic products and also it is based on a part of the Cue Utilization Theory from which aspects of price and packaging cues were taken in order to determine the effect they can have on consumers when purchasing sustainably packaged products.

This research provides a new contribution as well as recommendations for the state authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as for the companies dealing with the sale of sustainably packaged cosmetic products.

Key words: Consumer Attitudes, Consumer Behavior Theory, Cue-Utilization Theory, Sustainability, Sustainable Packaging, Beauty Products

## SAŽETAK

Održivost kao jedna veoma bitna tema današnjeg vremena je počela tek od prije nekoliko godina biti u većem fokusu od strane zemljama širom svijeta kako bi se smanjio efekat klimatskih promjena i kako bi se na neki način očuvala planeta Zemlja. Kako su se mnogi novi održivi načini proizvodnje počeli pojavljivati, jedan od njih jesu i održivo pakovani kozmetički proizvodi koji su od nedavno postali od velikog značaja posebno uzimajući u obzir da većina populacije koristi kozmetičke proizvode na dnevnom nivou, neko čak i više od jednoga puta. S obzirom na to da su potrošači ti koji na neki način odlučuju hoće li se nešto i koliko koristiti, veoma je bitno ispitati njihove stavove kako bi se dobio uvid u potrošačko stanje vezano za ovako pakovane kozmetičke proizvode.

S tim u vezi cilj ovog master rada jeste ispitati stavove potrošača o održivo pakiranim kozmetičkim proizvodima u Bosni i Hercegovini, kao i faktore koji bi mogli utjecati na njihovu kupnju, te na taj način donekle dobiti uvid u to koliko su ljudi upoznati s održivošću u Bosni i Hercegovini i koliko je ona tamo uopšte zastupljena. Što se tiče metodologije istraživanja, odabrano je kvalitativno istraživanje u vidu polustrukturiranog intervjua sa građanima Bosne i Hercegovine koji pripadaju Generaciji Z i Milenijalcima. Bosna i Hercegovina je izabrana kao zemlja u kojoj će se istraživanje provoditi prvenstveno zato što je ova tema veoma u trendu i bitno je vidjeti stavove građana zemlje kako bi se ustanovilo kolika je njihova zainteresiranost za istu. Isto tako istraživanje na ovu temu još uvijek nije rađeno u Bosni i Hercegovini i samim tim bi na neki način se dao novi doprinos i isto tako preporuka za buduće studije.

Ovaj master rad je baziran na Teoriji Ponašanja Potrošača iz koje su za analizu uzeti lični faktori (životni stil, godine, spol i prihod) kako bi se istražili kod učesnika i kako bi se otkrio njihov uticaj na kupovinu održivo pakovanih kozmetičkih proizvoda i isto tako je baziran na dijelu Teorije Korištenja Znakova iz koje su uzeti aspekti znakova Cijene i Pakovanja kako bi se utvrdio efekat koji mogu imati na potrošače prilikom kupovine održivo pakovanih kozmetičkih proizvoda.

Ovim istraživanjem se daje novi doprinos kao i preporuke za državne vlasti Bosne i Hercegovine kao i za kompanije koje se bave prodajom održivo pakovanih kozmetičkih proizvoda.

Ključne riječi: Stavovi Potrošača, Teorija Ponašanja Potrošača, Teorija Korištenja Znakova, Održivost, Održiva Pakovanja, Kozmetički Proizvodi

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## **ABBREVIATIONS:**

UN- United Nations  
BHA- Butylated hydroxyanisole  
BiH- Bosnia and Herzegovina  
CBT- Consumer Behavior Theory  
CUT- Cue Utilization Theory  
RQ- Research Question

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, sustainability as a trend is increasingly taking root and is reflected both in the behavior of consumers, and in the behavior of companies in connection with the provision of sustainable products and services. It can be said that sustainability is in some way a consequence of the fear of global warming, which is very realistic considering the behavior of people around the world towards nature (Herbes, Beuthner and Ramme, 2020).

In the aspect of the environment, people are recklessly using plastic daily for many activities and in this way cause enormous damage to nature and to themselves because without a healthy nature there is no healthy person (Jambeck *et al.*, 2015; Wright and Kelly, 2017; Beaumont *et al.*, 2019 and Bergmann *et al.*, 2019). With the practice of sustainability, it is believed that the consequences of global warming and pollution of nature could be mitigated or at least slowed down. Therefore, the increasingly frequent occurrence and emphasis on the importance of sustainability is not surprising and gives reason to discover how consumers react to sustainability, and how much they tend to pay attention to it when choosing beauty products.

In order to consume, people spend money on certain products or services. However, factors that motivate them to purchase one product compared to another are very important to discover because customers can be segmented through them. As already stated, the way people consume products and services greatly affects the world they live in, and it is understandable that with the more frequent use of the sustainability trend, sustainable consumption has also developed. Given that consumption is present almost every day as a human action, it can be said that it has a huge impact on whether people pollute or not pollute the environment (Vargas-Merino, Rios-Lama and Panez-Bendezú, 2023). By introducing sustainable consumption into their routine, people greatly contribute to reducing the damage that reckless consumption can cause to the environment (Vargas-Merino *et al.*, 2023).

What has greatly encouraged companies around the world to change their way of doing business and include sustainability in the product packaging process are the UN goals that indicate that by 2030, all materials used to make product packaging will be environmentally friendly so that sustainability can live around the world (Bexell and Jönsson, 2017). In this way, the harmfulness of the mass production of various products will be mitigated, which will hopefully contribute to a slightly healthier and more responsible world.

What is one of the most important factors when considering sustainable consumption and sustainable products are consumer attitudes toward all this. Consumers are what companies are guided by and whom they intend to please. If consumers are not satisfied with certain changes and do not support them, then all the effort goes to waste. Fortunately, as they had an impact on companies, the UN goals, as well as the increasingly emphasized trend of sustainability, certainly had an impact on the behavior and consumption of customers related to sustainable products.

As sustainability is a very popular trend, so has taking care of yourself using various beauty products become a must-have in today's world. The Internet, various influencers, and beauty gurus present people with new products in the beauty sphere every day, with which they can beautify themselves and their bodies and thus feel beautiful in their own skin. Unfortunately, not all companies that mass-produce these beauty products are environmentally aware and there are still various loopholes and omissions.

As important as it is that the products themselves are made of sustainable materials, it is equally important that the packaging of those same products is in accordance with sustainability. Consumers' concern for the world around them, taking into account nature, has greatly stimulated their desire for sustainable packaged beauty products (Smallbone, 2005). Therefore, brands should aim to satisfy their customers and provide them with value by listening to their wants and needs.

Product packaging is an essential segment because primarily it should contain all important and main details about the product that may be of interest to the customer (Turkcu and Tura, 2023). However, it is also of great benefit if the packaging itself is sustainably made. In order to address consumer needs, brands incorporate innovations in the production process in various ways to create sustainable packaging that will be acceptable and usable because it is very important to preserve product quality in sustainable packaging (Herbes *et al.*, 2020). Sustainable packaging refers to packaging made from natural materials, that does not harm the environment or people, and is also packaging whose life can be extended, i.e. it can be recycled and reused (Zhang and Zhao, 2012). Today, more than ever, customers have more space to browse beauty products that suit their needs, and it is also sometimes very difficult to decide on one product considering that they have a wide range of choices. If customers hesitate between products that give same results, the one identified as green has an advantage over the other (Ottman and Books, 1998). Guided by a healthier approach to life, consumer habits are changing, and although they may have used a certain product in the past that was not sustainable, they are willing to change it for a sustainably packaged product that may not have the same result as the previous one, but has long-term benefits related to the environment (Van Birgelen, Semejin and Keicher, 2009).

The authors Kotler and Keller (2012) presented three factors (personal, social, and cultural) that can influence consumer behavior and, therefore, its consumption, and also use psychological processes (motivation, learning, perception, memory, and learning) to explain how they motivate a person to buy something. These factors, as well as the psychological processes that occur in each person, can help researchers to understand their choices, i.e. their motives when choosing sustainable products.

According to Wahab *et al.*, (2021), elements such as lifestyle, social awareness as well as environmental responsibility can influence the acceptability or unacceptability of sustainable packaging. Likewise, factors that can also influence the customer's purchase decision related to a sustainable packaged beauty product are the availability of that product as well as the characteristics of the product (Nguyen, Anh, and Tuyen, 2021). According to Fontes,



Moreira, and Carlos (2021), socio-demographic factors should be investigated for the purpose of understanding their influence on sustainable consumption.

Also, the authors Rhein and Schmid (2020), in their research recommend future research taking into account socioeconomic factors (age, income, education) to establish their influence on consumers and their choice to consume sustainable products.

"Signs on the way" can motivate customers to buy the product or give them an idea of the product itself to see if it is ecologically, price-wise, and structurally acceptable for them. Cue utilization theory deals with this aspect (Olsen, 1972; Olson, 1978). According to Magnier and Schoormans (2015), future research should investigate the impact of eco-design elements from packaging on consumer attitudes.

The authors De Canio, Martinelli, and Endrighi (2021), investigated the connection between internal factors (concern for nature,..) and external factors (eco-label,..) to establish how such a connection affects the consumption of sustainable products. Likewise, Rees, Ourania, and Louise (2019), investigated the impact of 13 sustainability cues on consumer consumption.

Taking into account all the previous sources, this research has included the personal factors (gender, age, lifestyle, and income) mentioned by Kotler and Keller (2012) that can have an impact on consumer attitudes toward sustainably packaged beauty products. Likewise, packaging and price cues related to sustainably packaged beauty products that can have an impact on consumers were investigated. Attention was paid to internal factors (lifestyle) that can influence the customer's choice, as well as to external factors such as (eco-label, product packaging).

### **1.1. Purpose of the Thesis**

Sustainability, as a very current topic, is having a huge impact on how consumers behave in their daily lives, which products they use, and how they use them (Van Birgelen *et al.*, 2009). It is very important to understand the attitudes of consumers and understand why they use the products that they use, as well as what can encourage them to use them. Although many existing research papers have investigated the effect of sustainable packaging on customers, and how they react to it, those studies mainly focused on sustainable food packaging because it is something that people use every day (Magnier and Schoormans, 2015; Oloyede and Lignou, 2021; De Canio *et al.*, 2021). The authors Zeng and Durif (2019), who conducted research related to the effect of sustainably packaged food products on consumers recommended that future research should consider sustainably packaged beauty products, and investigate what attitudes consumers have towards them.

Thus, this research has expanded the knowledge about consumer attitudes regarding sustainably packaged beauty products to better understand this occurrence. This research aims to examine the attitudes of consumers about sustainably packaged cosmetic products in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as factors that could influence their purchase of them,

and to thereby obtain to some extent an overview of how much people are familiar with sustainability in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and how much it is represented there in general. Therefore, these are the research questions of this thesis:

1. How familiar are consumers with sustainably packaged beauty products in Bosnia and Herzegovina?
2. How do personal factors encourage customers to buy sustainably packaged beauty products?
3. What are the factors discouraging consumers from buying sustainably packaged beauty products?
4. How do packaging cues affect customers to buy sustainably packaged beauty products?
5. How do price cues affect customers to buy sustainably packaged beauty products?

The main objectives of this master's thesis are to:

- Investigate how familiar consumers are with sustainably packaged beauty products
- Understand which factors support the purchase of sustainably packaged beauty products
- Understand which factors discourage the purchase of sustainably packaged beauty products
- Discover what role packaging cues play in the process of buying sustainably packaged beauty products
- Discover what role price cues play in the process of buying sustainably packaged beauty products

## **1.2. Methodology**

For the purpose of expanding knowledge and gaining new insights research is used (Ahmad *et al.*, 2019). In order to give a valid, and comprehensive answer to the problem and research questions of this master thesis, this research includes both primary and secondary sources of data. There are mainly two general types of research, namely qualitative and quantitative (Ahmad *et al.*, 2019)

Regarding primary data sources, qualitative research was conducted on Generation Z and Millennials. Generation Z was taken into account as a generation that follows and adapts to trends, while Millennials were selected as a slightly older generation whose opinion is worth considering. Both men and women from these two age groups were examined. The reason for mixing these two generations was that each generation, like a person, has its own characteristics, and it was interesting to identify and understand the differences between the generations. These differences were also taken into account to understand how they have affected the use and consumption of sustainably packaged beauty products. In order to get an in-depth opinion from the participants, the qualitative method that was used is in-depth semi-structured interviews (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011).

An in-depth semi-structured interview was chosen instead of a focus group because it gives a more comprehensive and personal picture of the participants' attitudes (Guest *et al.*, 2017). As secondary data sources, reliable Internet sites, journal articles as well as books were used to get a general and relevant opinion about the topic itself.

### **1.3. Structure**

This master's thesis consists of 6 parts. Both theoretical and empirical analyses were done to comprehensively understand the topic and properly answer the research questions. Those 6 parts include:

Part I: INTRODUCTION gives an insight into what this master's thesis is based on and why the topic of this thesis is relevant today. An overview of the research questions of this paper is also given, as well as an overview of what will be done in order to answer these questions adequately.

Part II: SUSTAINABILITY IN MARKETING defines the main concepts of Sustainability as an occurrence, the evolution of sustainability in marketing as well as what is the influence of Sustainability on consumer attitudes.

Part III. SUSTAINABLE PACKAGED BEAUTY PRODUCTS is the part in which cosmetic products and sustainable packaging of cosmetic products were defined as well as their characteristics and also the relationship between beauty brands and consumers with sustainably packaged cosmetic products. This part also describes the theories on which this work is based, namely Consumer Behavior Theory and Cue Utilization theory (packaging and price cues).

Part IV: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY consists of stating the way the research was conducted as well as the way the participants were interviewed. There are also Research Findings and Analysis in this part, the limitations, and managerial implications will be stated accordingly as well as the suggestions for future research.

Part V: CONCLUSION is the final part of the master thesis and the one where the main conclusions regarding this topic are presented.

## 2. SUSTAINABILITY IN MARKETING

### 2.1. Defining Sustainability

The way people currently live and how much they care about the environment greatly affects the future generations yet to come into this world (Stern, 2000). Caring or not caring about nature can certainly lead to the various changes on this planet that certain people are actually not aware of yet. Anyone who looks around themselves can see that the best example of human influence and carelessness towards nature is the current state of planet Earth which is predicted to be worse if people don't change their patterns of living. The uncontrolled use of natural resources, without taking into account their regeneration, leads to a major problem that greatly affects the planet and thus climate change (García and Sanz, 2018).

Today, there are new examples each day that confirm how the climate is changing, and one of the classic examples, where people can actually see the impact of global warming is the Arctic, which, as one of the coldest places, has begun to warm much faster than it was the case in the previous years (Huang *et al.*, 2017). This is certainly an occurrence that can bring people to think about their lives, and how everything changes very rapidly. Also in Europe, temperatures are increasing, and are expected to increase even more both in winter and in the summer period (King and Karoly, 2017). During the summer period people are witnessing extreme heatwaves in Europe, and temperatures are much higher than they have used to be (King and Karoly, 2017). The winters are not as cold as they used to be several years ago, and the snow is also falling less.

Sustainability as a term means that what an individual in one part of the world uses and does has a significant impact on people on the other side of the world, as well as on future generations, although they may not be aware of it, due to pollution on the one hand, the damage is transferred to the other side and so in a circle (García and Sanz, 2018).

It is important to note that sustainability has developed over the years, and that concern for sustainability was not the same years ago as it is today, since the word was only introduced as something connected to humankind in 1972 (Kidd, 1992). Previously, sustainability was mostly talked about as a topic that was exclusively related to the care of nature, and back then people were afraid of the future, and how uncontrolled consumption would affect the future, but not as intensely as it is now.

What is most specific for the 21st century is that sustainability is promoted through businesses, which was not the case before, and therefore it can be said that the impact of sustainability on the general public is now greater than ever and much more prevalent in business, and private practices than this has been the case in the past (Ghaffar *et al.*, 2023).

Unfortunately, until people become more morally responsible for the world around them, the climate situation is predicted to worsen year after year. Likewise, with their irresponsible behavior, it can be said that humans are the main culprits of the global warming, whose

consequences can be seen even today but, in the future, it is predicted that it will threaten the Earth and the consequences can be fatal for the humanity (Bongaarts, 1992).

Taking into account the above, it can be said that sustainability as such is a very current and interesting topic that is truly worth mentioning and should be given much more importance than perhaps is the case, especially in the country Bosnia and Herzegovina where this trend is evolving, and people are becoming more aware of the recycling, as well as about the other sustainable practices with which they can protect the nature (UN, 2023). As much as it has been mentioned in everyday life, the importance of sustainability has also been reflected in companies, because everything that is a trend, and for what people strive for, on the one side, also concerns businesses (Auliandri *et al.*, 2018).

As a result, companies around the world are now putting much more focus on incorporating sustainability as a business practice to adapt to the new market demands, and by doing that they are taking care to maintain their position on the market which has huge potential and is full of the competitors (Pooja, Shirin and Sujata, 2022).

According to Strange and Bayley (2008), the three fundamental pillars of sustainability are society, profit, and nature. Sustainability implies that these 3 pillars are interconnected and that the way one is used affects the other two in the short or long term (Strange and Bayley, 2008). The authors call this principle the triple bottom line, which means that companies should pay attention to both natural and social issues as much as they care about profits (Charter *et al.*, 2002).

From this, one can see and understand the connection between these three pillars because when companies focus only on the profit without including the environmental or social aspect, the final results can only be temporary, but success cannot be seen in the long term run because other two aspects must also be included in business practices so that all needs can be fulfilled, and a balance between them can be maintained (Pooja, Shirin and Sujata, 2022). Each aspect has something unique, and companies have to establish this balance in order to win new as well as to keep old customers, taking into account the relationship with nature, which is ultimately valued by customers today, considering their very influential views regarding the climate changes (Vagasi, 2004).

There are many companies that have adapted to the new sustainability trend because in certain way they are “obliged” to do it if they want to survive in the future (Ghaffar *et al.*, 2023).

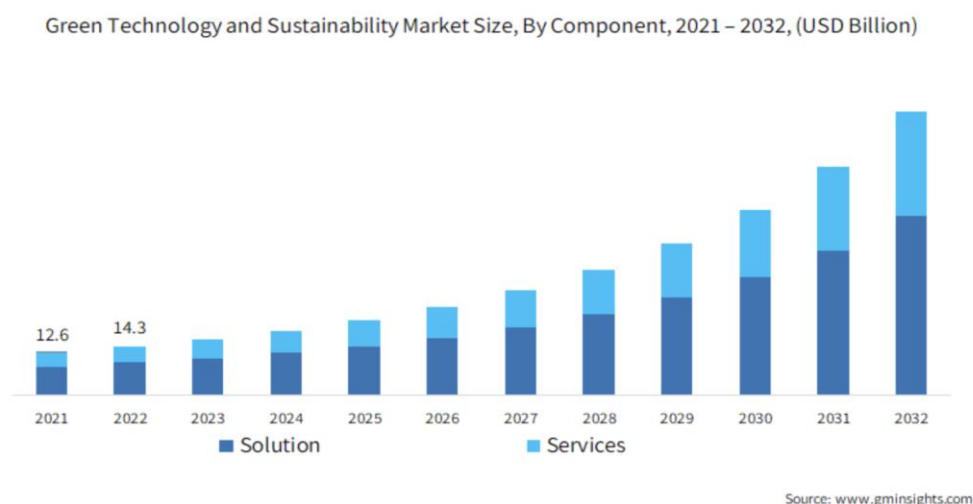
Certain examples of such companies are present in the automotive industry (Tesla, as well as other car companies that may have not been so much into sustainability, have changed their way of doing business), where the focus has now shifted to the production of electric vehicles, which do much less harm to the environment than is the case with standard vehicles (IEA, 2017).

The micro-mobility is also a new trend which is very useful for city transportation for almost every person because by using them they can get from point A to point B faster than that would be sometimes the case with a regular car or even with the bus when there is traffic jam present in the city (Abduljabbar, Liyanage and Dia, 2021). Examples of micro-mobility include electrical scooters, bikes, etc. (Abduljabbar, Liyanage and Dia, 2021). What is very interesting is that nowadays by just owning the app that represents those types of vehicles and by also paying the cost of the travel with them, people can activate the product that they see on the street and move with it around the city wherever they have to go.

The shift toward sustainability has also emerged in the food as well as in the beauty industry (Boz, Korhonen and Sand, 2020). It has become very “trendy” and popular to make and to produce organic products, made from natural materials or at least that bigger percentage of ingredients is natural, and also that the packaging of such products is under the sustainability guidelines, meaning that they have all the necessary certificates as well as that companies guarantee the adequate protection for the product contained within such packaging (Kahraman and Kazançoğlu, 2019).

This is crucial because packaging represents what is inside it, and by making stable packaging there is much less risk of the product inside being damaged on its way to the store shelves, and also during the product’s way to the consumer purchasing bag (Pan *et al.*, 2021). Also, since huge attention is paid to sustainability it is important that such packaging can be recycled after usage and reused to make new packaging (Siracusa and Rosa, 2018).

*Figure 1: Predictions for Green Technology and Sustainability Market Size (2021-2023)*



(Wadhwani, 2023)

Figure 1. shows how the demand for sustainability is growing and how much the market is actually expected to increase in the future. It can be said that sustainability is a trend of great importance for humanity, and the prediction of its growth at the global level is not surprising, but in a way understandable and expected, taking into account the intention of consumers to

move towards a better and healthier future in order to make this planet better for themselves and his successors (Ghaffar *et al.*, 2023).

Also, this kind of prediction for the sustainability market can be very useful for both existing and new businesses so that they can pay attention to what is in trend, and what are people valuing nowadays. It is well known that new businesses are thinking and weighing a lot about which sphere to invest in, what will be profitable for them on the new market, and what will not. The risk of failure is always present, but with this kind of information, startups can really benefit because it clearly shows them what to focus on and what kind of business will be more, and more appreciated in the future.

## **2.2. The Evolution of Sustainability in Marketing**

As times have changed and developed, so did various life patterns through the ages, and were transformed in a certain way. Humanity's view of the world around them is something that has also changed and something that is still changing from day to day because something that may be interesting and standard today, will not be the standard tomorrow for new generations and for the new eras coming in the future (Charter *et al.*, 2002). It is important to adapt and adopt those habits and patterns that are positive and that can have an effect on a better tomorrow, and one such pattern is sustainability.

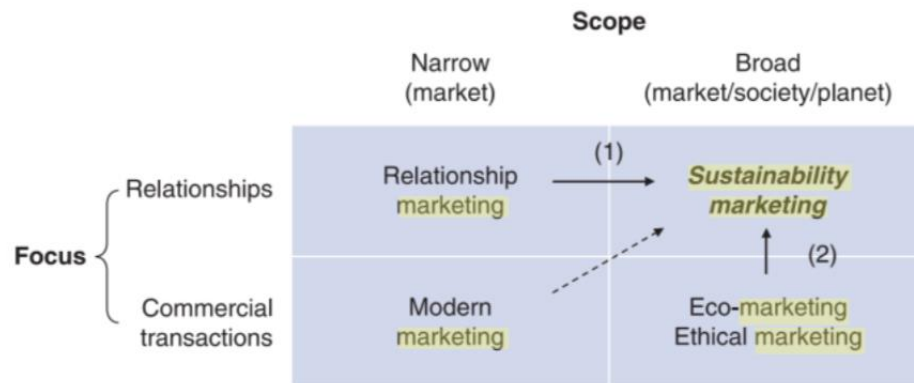
As lifestyles change, so do business practices and everything that makes them up. An example of this is marketing itself, which as a concept can be said to have developed a lot, and advanced over the years. Today, people can witness various innovations in the sphere of marketing that may have been unimaginable before (Hutapea, 2016).

While before, the normal way of marketing and selling was for salespeople to go door-to-door and to represent and sell new products to people, nowadays such things still exist but are considered somewhat “shameful” and quite old-fashioned, and can even be sometimes interpreted as some kind of fraud, because some of today's generations are not aware of such type of business that used to be completely normal in past (Bean, 2022).

Nowadays, people are much more enthusiastic about and trust influencer marketing, as well as social networks, which have become the source of all the necessary information that potential customers may be interested in when considering a certain brand and its products (Chávez *et al.*, 2023).

While before the main concern for companies was to sell people products without taking into consideration their feelings, with the introduction of the "Modern Marketing" nowadays the most important concept for companies is to make relationships, to understand the consumers' needs, and to make an effort to fulfill them by creating the best solution for them (Belz and Peattie, 2012).

Figure 2: Evolution of Marketing



(Belz and Peattie, 2012)

Figure 2. shows how marketing has evolved over a long period of time. It can be said that the sustainable marketing is an improved concept of marketing which combines established economic viewpoints with newly developed ideas of customer retention and satisfaction, as well as environmental, social and ethical viewpoints of sustainability (Belz and Peattie, 2012).

While it is very interesting how sustainability affects people and their shift to it because it is portrayed as a practice that has a huge impact on nature, what also changes are the business practices of companies that are increasingly turning to the "greener" side due to the shift of the behavior of consumers (Mandliya *et al.*, 2020). In certain ways, such a way of adaptation of companies can be connected with another topic related to the emergence of digitization and the transition to new technologies. The calculation there is very simple because if companies do not invest in innovations in these spheres and switch their way of doing business to digital channels, it can be said that they may be successful at the moment, but when it comes to the long run those companies that have transformed and included digital channels in their business practices will have an advantage over the other ones that stagnated (Schrader and Droegehorn, 2017). The faster the companies take this fact into consideration, the sooner it will be better for them. This is something that can also be said for companies that don't incorporate sustainable practices in their way of doing business.

Today there are many companies that people condemn if their business practices are contrary to what is good for nature, animals, and people. Animal testing, the use of materials that cause permanent damage to the skin (cancer, skin diseases,...), the use of materials that harm nature, and the usage of people from third world countries as cheap workforce, are all examples of what the majority of the world's population condemns and this is anything that can spoil the image of a certain company (Crowe and Simon, 2000). Previously, such practices were not given that much importance, however, various revolutions and movements of various organizations that care for the planet have greatly influenced consumers to become much more aware of who and what kind of products they buy from (Pooja, Shirin and Sujata, 2022).



Marketing as a concept is very important for every company, and how the company operates will greatly affect whether it actually does good or bad marketing (Hutapea, 2016). The type of marketing that a company chooses can be a very powerful tool to enhance or to endanger its image. There are various ways through which companies can incorporate sustainability into their marketing practices. Some of these ways are donations to plant new forests, helping endangered places, etc. When talking about the beauty companies or companies in general that produce products that require various raw materials, when using proven raw materials, i.e. those that do not have a negative effect on the environment, choosing a business partner who also cares about sustainability, and ultimately the production of products that are sustainable will lead to the result that such a company is placed on the market as one that does fair and good business (Crowe and Simon, 2000).

While this type of company cares about its profit, it also takes into consideration the environment and people, which again leads to the triple bottom line which nowadays companies are increasingly striving for.

The reason why more companies have put the consumer in focus is because the companies have become aware that by fulfilling the needs of the consumers, they will earn enormous benefits both by having an advantage over competitors and by building a long-term and successful relationship with the customer, which after all, should be the business practice and goal of every company and brand that there exists on the market (Srivastava *et al.*, 2022).

In the past, communication with consumers was, to put it mildly, non-existent, i.e. not so much attention was paid to their needs and no relationship or deep communication was created with them in order to examine their real needs during the sales process, but it all came down to a kind of saying that all customers are equal and have equal needs, while today that relationship is much more versatile and intimate, and brands want to hear the opinion of consumers so that they can provide them with what they really want and ultimately to improve their way of working, and their position on the market (Lakshmi and Rau, 2011).

The Internet discovery as well as many other changes have influenced the way people live and behave nowadays (Belz and Peattie, 2012). These new changes have somehow created a new world of needs that need to be met in order for clients to be satisfied with the operations of nowadays companies and businesses. As technology changed, so did the point of view of customers and companies. Due to numerous innovations that have appeared in the past, the way of treating nature has also changed, and people have started to use natural resources in an inappropriate way, unaware that such an inappropriate way of consumption will cause enormous damage to the planet Earth (Joshua and Joshua, 2017). In recent years, in some way, consumers as well as companies have wised up and become more aware of the life around them and how much damage humanity can actually do with some everyday activities (using plastic dishes, products that are unusable after one use, not throwing garbage in the right place, etc.), and they have decided to make certain changes.

This is why sustainability is being mentioned more and more, especially as a business practice that tries to prevent even greater damage to the Earth. In order to draw attention to this trend, new slogans, ways of producing products as well as brand messages are now mainly focused on sustainability and are thus encouraging the masses to buy such products.

What is very important to point out is that the statements, messages of the company as well as their campaigns must in no case be misleading in the sense that they promote one thing and do another. Unfortunately, there are many companies worldwide that have tried to focus attention on themselves in this way, but everything that starts with a lie doesn't last long, and therefore such companies have created an anti-advertisement for themselves because consumers have become very aware that they are selling a lie, and that they do not stand behind what they emphasize that they are working (Kahraman and Kazançoğlu, 2019).

Doing business in today's world means being the target of anyone's research and comments, and considering that today people have at their disposal all possible tools to investigate the credibility of certain marketing practices, only those companies that do business in the right way can predict themselves a better future. Taking into account the fact that customers are people who become, if not immediately, then after some time aware of manipulation if someone tries to perform it on them, and it is very easy to conclude that they actually want the truth from the company they want to buy products from because if there is no truth, there is no healthy and long-term relationship with such a company or with its products.

### **2.3. Influence of Sustainability on Consumer Attitudes**

People as individuals are what make up society around the world and without them, almost nothing would make sense. Although new technologies bring new innovations such as AI technology, robots, etc., still nothing can completely replace a human as a person who does the daily activities that are inherent to him (Loebbecke *et al.*, 2020). Human beings are exposed to various events and situations in their everyday life, and it is logical that each of them can have their own opinion about each situation, and accordingly express their behavior according to a given situation or trend.

Attitudes are a key part of everyone's life because people use attitudes to express their opinion about certain situations (Gwinn and Krajbich, 2020). The attitudes of each person can be the result of his many years of experience in life, and they can also be inherited in some way.

It is important to understand that the diversity of attitudes enriches this world, because if everyone had the same attitude towards everything, the world would seem rather one-way and impersonal.

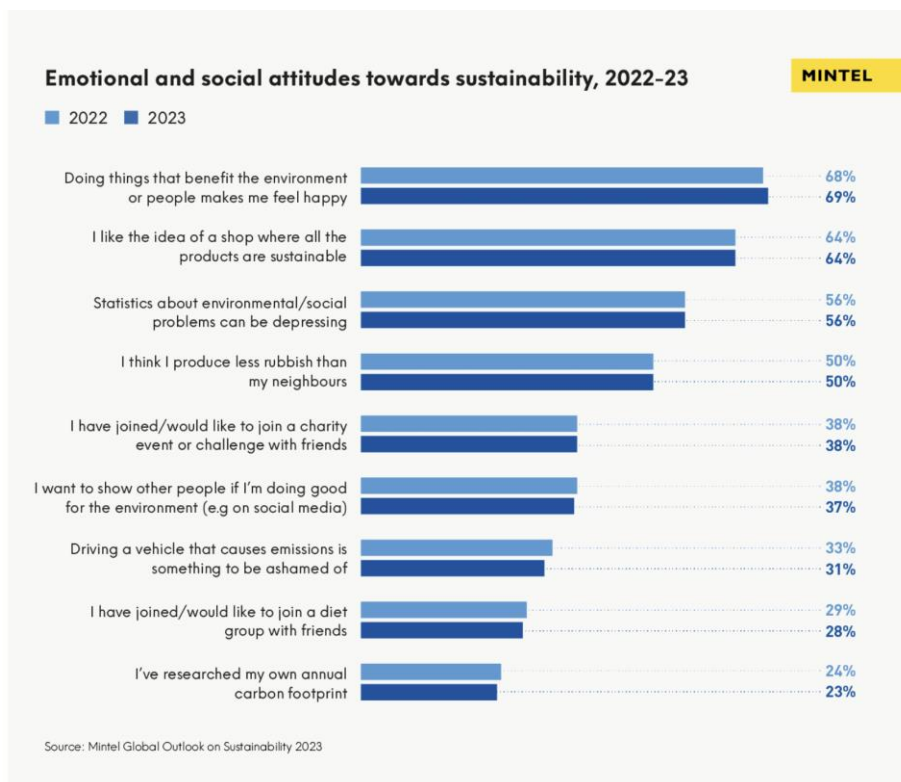
Almost every person in one part of his life becomes a supporter of novelties and trends that he likes both for personal and sometimes for social interests. Sometimes the person himself is influenced by the environment to follow that trend, and sometimes he/she is simply

morally aware because as a supporter of that trend, he/she would do something more for himself/herself, for society, and for the world in which he/she lives. And so with many novelties that have been brought up by a new age, what is certainly an indicator of how much new trend has an impact on the world are consumers, because they are the ones who decide what is a trend and what is not.

If consumers' attitudes are negative towards a certain trend, it is very likely that such a trend will quickly die out and disappear from society because it will not receive the necessary attention and support from it. When it comes to sustainability, it can be said that people are the main drivers of how much it will really be implemented in the system, because with their behavior towards sustainability and the acceptance or neglect of sustainable practices, people have a great effect on the world (Srivastava *et al.*, 2022).

Taking into account the concern of consumers for the world they live in, which is increasingly visible, it can be said that in most countries of the world, there is a growing trend of sustainability, recycling, and everything that goes into protecting the planet Earth as much as possible (Pooja, Shirin and Sujata, 2022). By doing "smart" shopping, driving electric vehicles, recycling, and incorporating many other examples like these in everyday life, consumers can greatly contribute to the growth of sustainability and with such actions, they can motivate others to emulate them and, if this is not their practice, to start living "greener" without harming and using in such large quantities of natural resources.

Figure 3: Consumer attitudes toward sustainability (2022-2023)



(Cope, 2023)

The Figure 3. from the above shows how consumer attitudes toward sustainability have changed in the period (2022-2023). It can be seen that for certain aspects there is a slightly positive increase (1%), in others there is slight decrease (1%), and there are aspects where attitudes is same for both years. It is good that attitudes are changing, especially if there is an increased number of attitudes toward sustainable practices, and it is worth exploring why for certain aspects there is a negative trend.

Emotions and attitudes are something that every individual has inside him as an integral part of him, and when he will show an emotion or express an attitude depends greatly on the situation in which he is. When a person becomes aware that he is doing some things on an everyday level that do not bring him improvement in the longer life paths, it is normal for him to somehow show his emotions and attitudes related to the phase in which he is. Speaking about the results that are clearly shown in the Figure 3, which takes into concern the emotions and attitudes of consumers regarding sustainability, it is evident that the respondents have become aware of the seriousness of the situation they are in and that with their actions they are trying to repair the damage that has already been caused so as not to escalated into something more. For this reason, both the growth of the sustainability market, the change in the consumer behavior and the transition to healthier and "greener" lifestyles are noticeable (Charter *et al.*, 2002). It can truly be said that switching to such habits is actually a small step for man, but a giant one for the humanity.

### **3. SUSTAINABLE PACKAGED BEAUTY PRODUCTS**

#### **3.1. Defining Beauty Products**

Since ancient times, people have beautified themselves in various ways to be more beautiful to themselves and to others. Most historians confirm that ancient Egypt was the first place where the usage of the beauty products was present and introduced (El-Kilany and Raouf, 2017). It is very important to understand that the cosmetic products are only an addition to the human beauty that everyone possesses within themselves and that it is not only them that make people more beautiful but also their personality and their way of thinking about life. Unfortunately, under the influence of new trends in the use of beauty products, it is most often the young generation who today are the "target" of various beauty products that are offered to beautify themselves. In a way, this is a good thing if cosmetics are used within the limits of normality and to add an additional note of beauty to a person, however, most young people today overdo their use, and they are not aware that it is not really necessary for them because they are still young. In this situation, the most important factor are parents who have the role of educating their children, and instilling confidence in them so that they feel beautiful in their own skin even without all those beauty products, and that they learn what is appropriate as beauty for their age and what is not.

Nowadays, various types of cosmetic products can be used for the whole body such as products for hair care, face, and body care, as well as make-up and perfumes. Interestingly,

in today's world almost every now and then people can see and discover a new type of product on the market that they might not even have known about before. In ancient times, cosmetic products were made from natural and sometimes unusual ingredients, and the process of making them took much longer than it does today because the technologies then were not as developed as they are today as well as the knowledge of making such products (El-Kilany and Raoof, 2017). Nowadays, everything has somehow changed, new technologies and modern machines as well as new knowledge in the field of cosmetics have greatly influenced the acceleration of the process of making cosmetic products, and the result of all this are numerous changes in the beauty industry that are truly worthy of praise.

Almost every day, consumers witness the appearance of a new brand or a new cosmetic product which with good marketing, gains worldwide fame. Considering the growth of the beauty market, it is not surprising that companies around the world are trying to be as interesting and as accessible as possible to consumers in order to provide them with the products that they want (Statista, 2024). What should be kept in mind is that every new product is not necessarily a good product, because it can be witnessed that certain companies, with good marketing, try to market a product that does not deserve that much attention or simply does not meet the criteria that the company claims to meet (Kahraman and Kazançoğlu, 2019).

The new age that has come unfortunately gives a chance to everything and anything, however, the product that is not good or worth the attention will eventually lose its credibility over time, and go into oblivion considering the number of quality products that can replace such products nowadays (Kahraman and Kazançoğlu, 2019). It is important to take into account that what is a good product for one person is not good for another, but tastes are not worth discussing because too many people have too many different affinities and needs that need to be fulfilled. Across Europe and the world, various beauty brands strive to offer customers the best solution in the form of products that will be effective for their problems and that will hopefully meet all their needs.

These products vary and can be used for daily care in the form of the skincare which is very popular, products for hair, for problematic areas of the face and body, or products in the form of make-up, which is used by almost every person today no matter if it is a young or old person, especially when it comes to women, although nowadays it has become a trend in some countries for men as well to use make-up to cover their insecurities or to actually apply full makeup on their face ( Hall, Gough and Seymour-Smith, 2012).

When talking about the make-up and its use, there is a very noticeable difference between today's and previous make-up for both private and business or even film occasions. Before, as the most important make-up products, women used to have mainly lipstick, which they used to make up their cheeks, lips, and eyelids, a black charcoal pencil with which they would emphasize their eyebrows or their eyes (which was also done by the Egyptian pharaohs before), and possibly white powder to mattify their face and to even out the color of the face (El-Kilany and Raoof, 2017). Also, skin care in ancient times was based on the

use of various natural oils or the use of plants and pomades from them, which could be applied to the hair, face, and whole body and would nourish skin with very nice and natural products (El-Kilany and Raoof, 2017).

In the 60s of the 20th century, facial soap began to be used as one of the main products for facial care and cleansing (Rogoski, 2019). What can be said at first is that in the past, makeup and skincare were used quantitatively much less than they are today, however, each era is different and today's beauty industry scene is much more technologically advanced than it was the case before. Each era is in some way peculiar to itself and its customs, and thus also to the technology and things that they possess or do not possess.

The new times have led to the fact that people nowadays take much more care of themselves, their appearance, and their representativeness and spend "hours" beautifying themselves and their bodies, both independently and by going to professional people/artists to beautify them the way they want to look alike (Siddiqui, 2021). Of course, beautification existed as well in the past, but today everything is at a much higher level, considering the various innovations in the beauty industry, as well as the fact that today almost everything is available to people all over the world on the Internet, as well as in the physical stores.

The arrival of the Internet has affected various businesses as well as the beauty market. Social networks, as something on which almost every person today has some kind of profile, are a place where consumers can see all sorts of things related to the topic that interests them, especially when talking about beauty topics (Chávez *et al.*, 2023).

Social media has in a way become a source of people's advice for everything related to the beauty industry and people have also started following various other people's advices and reviews which are widely available on social media (Siddiqui, 2021). This can be because they are interested to hear new things that they maybe haven't heard before but can help them in the buying process, but also people on social networks are offering mostly free beauty advices, so instead of going to a dermatologist or makeup artist, people would rather take advice from an unknown person than to pay for it. This can sometimes be a very useful or extremely dangerous situation because the Internet is available to many people who may or may not have sufficient knowledge in the industry about which they are talking about through their posts, and by following some unverified advices, people can damage themselves and their bodies (Joshi *et al.*, 2022).

On social networks (Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, Facebook), new people, influencers, and brands publish posts every day that can attract the attention of the population by advertising good products, novelties, and tips on how to beautify themselves, which is very useful if it comes from the right people (Chávez *et al.*, 2023). Such announcements promote various trends in the beauty industry that women, and to some extent men, follow to a great extent because their goal is to look as good as possible and to maintain their health (Siddiqui, 2021).

What has become somewhat of a "trend" today is a healthier way of life, which implies that people take care of themselves and their health, what they take into themselves in the form of food and supplements, and what products and of what origin they apply to their face and body. It can be said that this "healthier" trend was greatly contributed by the pandemic that hit the whole world a few years ago and through which people around the world somehow changed their outlook on life and realized that health is what is really most important (Ścieszko *et al.*, 2021).

Interestingly, the current "trend" that is promoted on the social networks related to girls is the "clean girl beauty", which implies that nowadays the trend among girls is a dedication to a healthier life, to be careful what they put on their face and body and to apply a minimal amount of makeup in order to emphasize their natural beauty (Kim and Kim, 2022). Before that, the trend was to apply as many products as possible, especially when it comes to makeup and aesthetic procedures, regardless of where they come from which is still a trend, but the "clean girl" is something that has currently "infected" and is suggested by girls all over the social networks as a "must have" for every girl in order to emphasize their natural beauty.

Also, what is returning to the big doors of the beauty industry are products made exclusively from natural ingredients that include essential oils, various plants, and ingredients that can have various benefits for consumers (Lixandru, 2017). It is interesting to notice that skincare has actually started with these types of products in ancient times, and in a way, it can be said that the trends of the past are returning and that in this way people are turning more and more towards nature.

Product ingredients such as talc, perfumes, aluminum, and many others have now started to be ignored by consumers because they have realized how negative effects products with such ingredients can have on their body both in the short term and in the long-term period (Hartmann and Klaschka, 2017). Although there are still beauty brands that produce products with these ingredients, it is assumed that over time such products will disappear because more and more people will switch to some new healthier alternatives for such products in order to provide themselves with both beauty and health at the same time.

It is important to understand that no matter what beauty trend is currently being talked about, what will certainly be found in each beauty trend are cosmetic products, only a different type of product will be used for each trend. Therefore, it can be said that good cosmetic companies, as well as businesses that are just planning to market this type of product, will always be in a plus if they offer quality products that will help people beautify themselves, correct all the flaws they see in themselves and finally satisfy their needs.

Table 1: List of some Harmful and Safe ingredients that can be used for making the Beauty Products

<i>Harmful Ingredients</i>	<i>Safe Ingredients</i>
<i>“Talc” (Epstein, 2009)</i>	<i>“Shea butter” (Epstein, 2009)</i>
<i>“Parabens” (Epstein, 2009)</i>	<i>“Peptides” (Epstein, 2009)</i>
<i>“BHA” (Epstein, 2009)</i>	<i>“Hyaluronic acid” (Epstein, 2009)</i>
<i>“Aluminium” (Pineau et al., 2014)</i>	<i>“Retinol” (Epstein, 2009)</i>
<i>“Fragrance” (Epstein, 2009)</i>	<i>“Coconut oil” (Epstein, 2009)</i>

(Made by author, 2024)

In the above Table 1. are listed the most commonly used ingredients for beauty products and are divided into two groups because of the harm/good that they can produce in human bodies if people use products with such materials. The Harmful ingredients are the ones that each person should avoid because they can have terrible effects on the human skin or on the human body. Even if those effects may not be visible at the first usage, with the long period of the usage of products with such ingredients, people can get very bad forecasts and consequences on their bodies.

#### Harmful Ingredients:

- Talc- Talc as an ingredient in beauty products is a rather dangerous ingredient that, unfortunately, contains a considerable number of beauty products. Its carcinogenic properties can pretty much affect the human body and have many negative effects (Sinniah, 2011). Almost any beauty product that is powdery in composition may contain talc, and this is something that consumers must pay special attention to when reading the list of the product ingredients (Sinniah, 2011). Also, talc is found in products intended for the youngest generations, i.e. babies. Namely, baby powder, which is used to stop or prevent redness in babies, in most cases contains talc (Sinniah, 2011).
- Parabens- Hormonal imbalance is a quite common appearance among many people today, especially among young people. Various factors can affect this, but one of the possible factors are parabens, which are found in the various beauty products that people use nowadays (Alkafajy and Abdul-Jabbar, 2020). Likewise, they can be found in the food that people consume every day, so taking them both inside and outside the body can have quite undesirable effects on the human body (Alkafajy and Abdul-Jabbar, 2020). Various shampoos that are highly valued by people today as



well as various creams may contain this very harmful ingredient (Alkafajy and Abdul-Jabbar, 2020).

- BHA- Various foods as well as beauty products contain BHA, which is very harmful to the body both because it can cause allergic reactions in sensitive people and because it has been scientifically proven that it can cause cancer (Epstein, 2009).
- Aluminium- The basic personal hygiene of almost every individual is a deodorant that helps them to sweat less and that even if they sweat, that sweat does not have unwanted odors. However, what most people do not pay attention to when buying deodorant is its list of ingredients, which in most cases contains aluminum. By using this ingredient for a long period, people increase their risk of getting breast cancer (Jennrich and Schulte-Uebbing, 2016).
- Fragrance- Many households have at least some kind of the air freshener or at least some scented candles in their houses that help them neutralize negative smells in the house if they exist. The most usual ingredient of such items is the fragrance, which is also a very harmful material that enters the human body through the respiratory system and can also have various negative effects, such as skin allergies or similar (Rádis-Baptista, 2023). In addition to air fresheners, various beauty products can also contain this material in their list of ingredients, and it would be best if such products could be avoided so that they would not have a negative effect on the skin.

#### Safe Ingredients:

- Shea Butter- One fantastic ingredient that is used for elasticity and long-term hydration of the skin is shea butter. This product originates from Africa and can be found as an additional ingredient in beauty products, and can also be used alone (Goreja, 2004). What it is very good at is the prevention of stretch marks, which are a very common occurrence in people, both in pregnant women and developing children, as well as in athletes who by losing and gaining weight, change their skin's elasticity and thus stretch marks appear (Goreja, 2004). Many beauty brands include this ingredient in their products, especially those related to body care.
- Peptides- Peptides are ingredients that are very good for the face as well as for the body. What many people strive for today is maintaining the beauty of the face, preventing inflammatory processes, elasticity, and softness of the face, as well as preventing signs of aging, i.e. wrinkles. Peptides are known as ingredients that help a lot in solving these problems and it can be said that the emphasis on them is much more common nowadays than it used to be (Ferreira *et al.*, 2020). Beauty brands such as Rhode Beauty, Paula's Choice, and others have begun to pay a lot of attention to the products with this ingredient, and to market such products.

- **Hyaluronic acid-** Hyaluronan is an ingredient that is found in the human body and that gives it a youthful appearance, but also over the years, lack of water intake and similar, hyaluronan in the body decreases and makes the body look older, and more dehydrated and causes the loss of the freshness of the face and body, as well as the appearance of the wrinkles (Ratajczak *et al.*,2023). Hyaluronan as an ingredient is found in both medical and beauty products. It is a product that can also be drunk because it is something that is already in the body, as well as an ingredient that can be applied to the body (Ratajczak *et al.*,2023). Today, fillers, as well as Botox injected into the face, have become very well-known and desired treatments for which people spend a lot of money. What is a more natural version of filling the face is the injection of hyaluronic acid, which improves the appearance of the skin without having a counter effect, but is directly absorbed into the body (Ratajczak *et al.*,2023). Today it is one of the most sought-after ingredients in the beauty products, and beauty companies emphasize the existence of hyaluronic acid in almost every product as a must-have for human skin that can be used on an everyday basis (Ratajczak *et al.*,2023).
- **Retinol-** The trend of recent years is the use of retinol in the various beauty products that are used both for the face and the body. As a very powerful ingredient in the prevention of aging and the appearance of wrinkles and acne in men and women, retinol has become a must-have ingredient for every beauty user who wants to take care of himself and his body (Ries and Hess, 1999). What is specific about retinol is that it is a very strong ingredient that, once applied to the face, should not be exposed to too much sunlight, especially without SPF (Ries and Hess, 1999). In this regard, it is recommended that retinol should be used in some colder periods of the year and that its use should be avoided during late spring and summer because spots can form on the face during excessive exposure to the sun, which can then become a bigger problem for consumers. Considering its effectiveness and the consumers' demand for it, companies around the world have started to create many products that contain retinol in different percentages in order to meet the needs of the consumers and thus improve their business.
- **Coconut Oil-** Coconut as an ingredient and food is something that can be used both in the daily diet and is also represented in various beauty products. Coconut has various benefits for the human body, which most people may not even be aware of. Coconut oil is ideal as a mask for dry and damaged hair, because it has a healing effect, and it is very good for hydrating the hair and giving it a new shine (Sumit *et al.*, 2012). It is also an ideal replacement for makeup removal products because it removes makeup without any effort and has no negative effects on the face, except for skin that is already oily and cannot tolerate additional shine on the skin. Also, the benefits of coconut oil for dental hygiene have recently been reported because it gives natural whiteness to the teeth and can prevent tooth decay (Mardiati, Rikawarastuti and Wiradona, 2022). As an ingredient used in food, it is also represented, and is an

ideal substitute for people who are on a diet and avoid the intake of bad fats, and they can insert it instead of any oil, knowing that it can only have good effects on their body.

### **3.2. Defining Sustainable Packaging of Beauty Products**

Sustainability as a trend and phenomenon has touched almost all aspects of this world down to the smallest detail. And all for the sake of a better tomorrow for the generations coming into this world. As already mentioned before, the increasingly common occurrence of sustainability has somehow motivated both companies and customers to think "green" and to contribute to the Earth by conserving its resources and taking care of what they use, how much and why.

Considering the UN sustainability Goals for 2030 for countries across Europe, it is not surprising that many beauty companies have dedicated themselves to engaging their team of people and coming up with an effective solution that will be ecologically sustainable and at the same time functional for the users (Bexell and Jönsson, 2017). This is why products with all the necessary ecological certificates are on the scene, guaranteeing that their production minimizes damage to nature. Such products are sustainable not only in composition but also in the packaging (Ghaffar *et al.*, 2023).

Previously, companies paid much less attention to nature and took everything that nature created for granted. What kind of ingredients are used to get a beauty product was not at all of great importance as long as it performs its function and serves its users. A similar situation applies to the packaging of such beauty products, the packaging rules are mostly made of materials that cannot be recycled and were mainly intended for the one-time use (plastic packaging). Of course, such practices are still present in certain beauty companies today, but the good thing is that most of them are turning towards the right, i.e. sustainable, path (Martinho *et al.*, 2015).

When the UN sustainability goals are taken into account, it can be said that in some way companies are forced to choose that sustainable path because in the future the products and packages that are not sustainable will not even be able to be produced, and therefore such companies will not survive unless they make some changes in their business model (Bexell and Jönsson, 2017). In addition to these UN goals, what really has encouraged companies to change the board are primarily the customers, who are also one of the main actors in all companies because they dictate what passes and what does not pass.

Table 2: Sustainable and unsustainable materials used for the packaging of the products

Sustainable materials	Unsustainable Materials
“Recycled paper” (Saveth, 2023)	“Plastics” (Romão, Bettencourt, and Ribeiro, 2022)
“Cellulose” (Romão, Bettencourt, and Ribeiro, 2022)	“Styrofoam” (Alfarisi et al., 2024)
“Compostable materials” (Saveth, 2023)	“Aluminium” (Nadella, Hernandez-Baltazar and Gorthi, 2022)
“Plant based plastics” (Saveth, 2023)	“Glass” (Pongrácz, 2007)

(Made by author, 2024)

Although the brands themselves are aware of the trend of sustainability, which is very prevalent in almost all industries today, and for which they themselves are to some extent guilty due to their way of producing products, there are still those who do not care about this same trend, and continue to offer products to their customers in packaging that is not sustainable. These are mostly companies that only look at their profits while ignoring human and environmental factors because one of the biggest reasons why companies choose unsustainable materials is the price advantage of such materials compared to those that are sustainable (Hirschnitz-Garbers *et al.*, 2015). However, as stated above, such practices may still be able to be represented for a few more years, but eventually what awaits everyone in the future is a shift towards a sustainable lifestyle and the sooner beauty brands accept this, the better it will be for them.

### 3.3 Sustainable Packaging and Beauty Brands

Sustainability as a trend in both the consumer and creative sense has advanced a lot, especially when talking about the beauty industry, which is one of the most famous at the moment (Srivastava *et al.*, 2022). Nowadays, along with various novelties and innovations, one can also notice the huge growth of the beauty brands. It is important to note that there are brands that have been on the beauty scene for a long time, that have their own tradition of doing business and are recognizable by their authentic products to the masses.

It is also impossible not to notice how recently new beauty brands and products have been "born" created both by new companies and by world-famous celebrities who use their popularity on the singing or acting scene to monetize their fame on others ways, i.e. by selling various cosmetic products. In a way, it can be said that famous people who build their brand have an advantage if they have their own fan base from their previous profession who are ready to buy and consume everything they market, whether it's high quality or not.

Hailey Bieber (model), Selena Gomez (singer and actress), Kylie Jenner (media personality) are just some of the famous public figures who have created their own beauty brands in the world and whose products have truly amazed makeup and skincare lovers. In the Balkans, famous personalities who stand out with their makeup include Emina Jahović (singer), while Zorranah (influencer) and Lana Jurčević (singer) are known for their skincare lines. Of course, many world-famous beauty brands that have gained a fan base based on the success of their products, i.e. based on how satisfied consumers are with those products, are also worthy of the attention. Although various cosmetic products are advertised today on popular social networks (YouTube, Instagram, TikTok), the success of each product depends on how much value it actually provides to the consumer and whether it does its job the way the cosmetic companies promise it does.

Given the existence of sustainability as a trend, value is currently added for the products that promise and have a positive effect on the consumers as far as they are actually sustainable both in their composition and in their packaging. Special attention is paid to the packaging of these products, i.e. whether the packaging has all the necessary certificates, whether the packaging material is sustainable, and whether people can use it to do noble work, i.e. protect the nature around them (Vrabič-Brodnjak and Jestratijević, 2023). Packaging as such has advanced a lot over the years, today packaging is not only something that will preserve the product but also something that should attract customers with its color, appearance or any other characteristic that it possesses that is attractive for the end customer. However, it is important to note that the purpose of the packaging along with being sustainable, should be that it is made of high-quality sustainable materials that would protect the product from the inside so that it does not get damaged from any external threats that can occur to it.

What has become a very good practice among beauty brands is the one regarding sustainable packaging that if bought once, the next time the consumer can only take a refill for the same product, and there are a large number of companies that have adopted this practice, among others, the most famous are Rituals, The Body Shop, Charlotte Tilbury, etc. (Dube and Dube, 2023).

Likewise, some beauty skincare brands such as Lush and Kiehl's have a policy for consumers to return their purchased product's packaging to their nearest store after usage to receive recycling credits and rewards. In this way, companies are showing that they take care of the environment, and it is also how they create loyalty programs with their customers and build long-term relationships (Dube and Dube, 2023).

Unfortunately, as far as Bosnia and Herzegovina is concerned, the practice of offering refills and recycling programs for cosmetic products has not yet been established in the way that it is customary in European countries and the world, and therefore consumers are not sufficiently aware of recycling as is the case in other countries. A brand that operates in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as in the world is Lush, which has its own program for customers to collect 5 empty bottles and, after returning them, receive one free face mask. As for other global companies such as the above-mentioned Rituals, The Body Shop, etc.

these companies are still not represented in Bosnia and Herzegovina so that customers are somehow not even able to create healthier, sustainable habits.

By offering unique loyalty programs that would encourage recycling among consumers, Bosnian companies would rise to a higher level and thus improve their connection with their customers and build a long-term relationship.

*Table 3: List of the Luxury and Affordable Brands that claim to be sustainable in doing their business*

Luxury Beauty Brands	Affordable Beauty Brands
Shiseido	Balea
Estee Lauder	Honest Beauty
Guerlain	Lush
Biologique Recherche	L'occitane
Armani Beauty	Kiehl's
Sisley	Weleda
YSL	Loreal
La Mer	The Body Shop
Augustinus Bader	Origins
Prada	Rituals

*(Made by author, 2024)*

One of the very positive acts in the form of advertising was made by the REN skincare brand in 2021, with its "We are Allies" advertisement, where it teamed up with its biggest competitors on the market to jointly make a promise that by 2025, they would only produce sustainable packaging as would make their contribution to planet Earth (REN, 2021). "We are Allies" refers to the fact that in this case they do not fight against their competitors, but create what is good with joint forces (REN, 2021). This type of advertising greatly influences companies to present themselves as positive players in the market and also gives them an advantage over other competitors among customers who also care about sustainability and encourage them to buy their products.

While there are good examples of advertisements that gain popularity for a reason due to the credibility of the advertisement and products presented in it, there are also brands that do not play by the rules and do not choose an honest way when advertising their products. One such

example is the beauty brand Covergirl, which advertised its mascara as something sustainable and made from natural ingredients, which was the opposite of a product that did not contain the products it was said to contain, and the packaging was also made of pure plastic (Gardella, 2022). With this way of working, i.e. greenwashing, brands indicate that they somehow do not respect their customers and that they in a certain way "mock" their intelligence by trying to sell them products with dubious ingredients as something that is good for both them and nature (Chen and Chang, 2013).

This company received a lawsuit because of this false representation (Gardella, 2022). Just by getting the lawsuit, this type of company has in a way also received condemnation from customers who think soberly and for whom this kind of fraud is what they do not want from a brand with which they want to build long-term relationships (Kahraman and Kazançoğlu, 2019).

### **3.4. Sustainable Packaging of Beauty Products and Consumers**

The advantage of modernization in today's era is that customers are now able to choose what they want and what they don't want from a product in the process of buying it. Given the increasing interest in recycling and sustainability, companies are forced to include sustainability in their practices in order to attract a new segment of customers and to fulfill their social and in some way moral responsibility (Herbes, Beuthner and Ramme, 2020). It can be witnessed that quite a few well-known beauty brands, which before were not so much concerned with sustainability as a business practice, have recently converted in order to maintain and improve their existence on the beauty market. It stands to reason that in some cases, despite speaking and presenting their products as sustainable and not harmful to nature, companies are not completely honest with consumers, which ultimately can cause them to revolt and boycott the same products (Kahraman and Kazançoğlu, 2019). L'Oréal is a brand known for customer complaints regarding greenwashing because although they have presented certain products and their packaging as sustainable, the inscription on the bottles showed the exact opposite, which ultimately caused a huge revolt among customers (Majláth, 2017).

What is very important and appreciated by customers are the sincere words and actions of the company, especially when they adopt some novelties in their products. In a way, this is the right principle for a healthy and long-lasting relationship between the company and the customer, because every fraud is discovered at some point. Today, it is almost impossible to cover up a company's failure/mistake, especially because people have the right to speak and if just a few consumers give their negative judgment about an injustice done by a beauty brand, in a short time such a review will reach various potential customers who will based on such reviews close the door for such a company, perhaps without even being familiar with its products.

With various economic crises affecting the whole world, it is quite difficult to stay upright and do the job properly, however, every effort pays off in the end and sometimes it is better to take smaller but correct steps in order to make the future great.

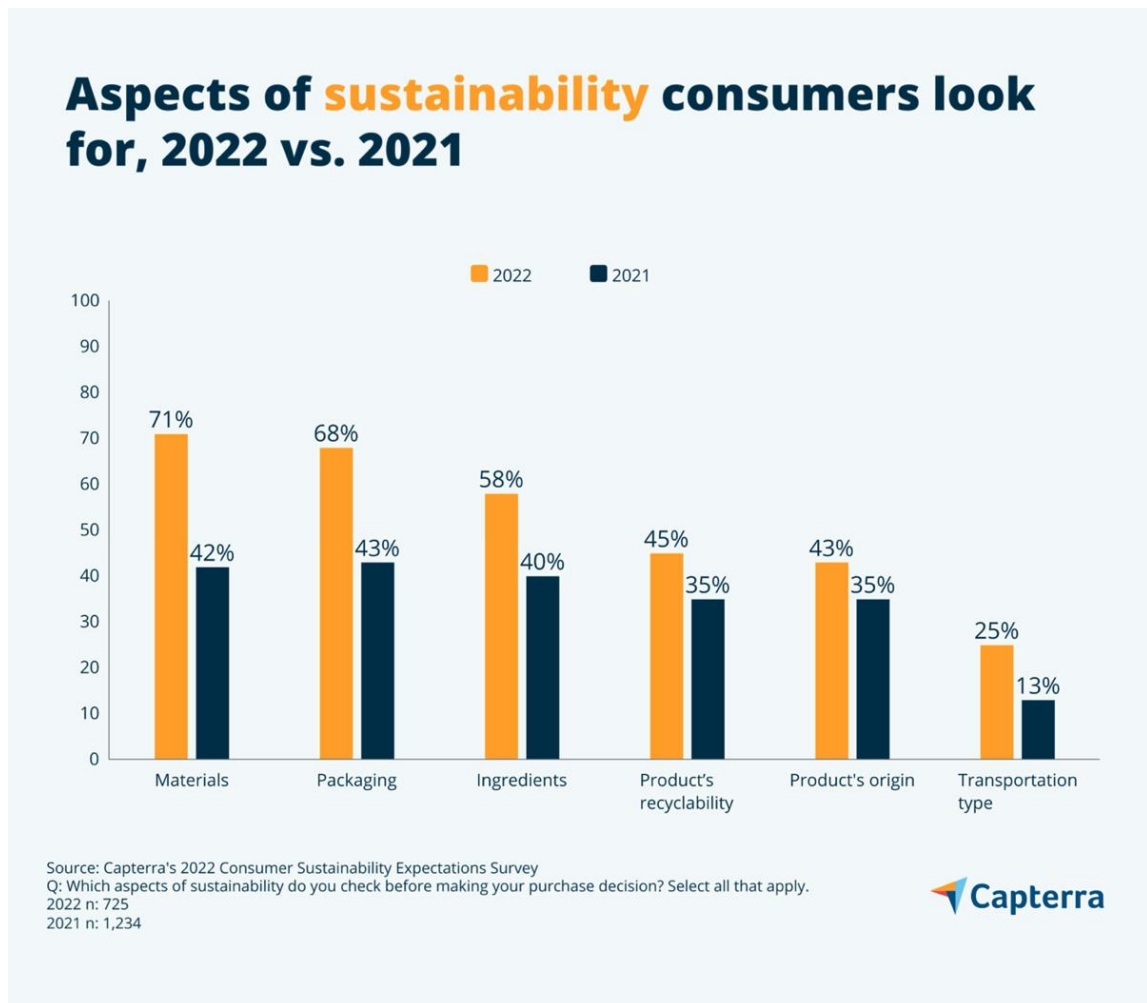
When talking specifically about customers, the emergence of sustainability and the emphasis on its importance has caused many to feel a need for a better tomorrow (Seifollahi, 2023). As already stated in the previous part of this research, sustainability is something that arose as a response to climate change, and by applying it in their everyday life, customers fulfill their responsibility towards the planet Earth, both because of the fear of the consequences of reckless use of resources and because it is a proper and moral thing to do. Regarding the sustainable packaging of beauty products, it is very important to emphasize what it actually represents for consumers and how someone actually knows what is sustainable and what is not. First of all, it is very important that the customer is previously informed by the media, social networks, etc. about sustainability so that something could not be presented as such to him, but it is not (Herbes, Beuthner and Ramme, 2020). The ingredients inside the product, the eco-label as well as the raw materials used to make the packaging tell whether the product is sustainable or not (Wahab *et al.*, 2021). Also, the impact of making such a product on the environment dictates whether such a product is sustainable and suitable for a customer who is looking for the same.

Certain studies, by investigating the opinions of customers regarding the purchase of sustainable products, came to the conclusion that recently more people have turned to sustainable shopping, and even though they may previously had a product that was their favorite for many years, they decided to become more aware regarding the nature and replace that product with a new and perhaps not even better product that is made in accordance with sustainability and does not have a fatal/ bad impact on the environment (Van Birgelen *et al.*, 2009).

There are many examples of people who have turned to sustainability and who, for the betterment of all, even promote such products on social networks and give their reviews about them in order to let other people know that they should start looking a little more at the nature that surrounds them and which should not be taken for granted, because just as a gardener needs to water and take care of his flowers if he wants big plants, so people should take more care of the planet Earth in order to provide both themselves and people in the future with a healthier and less polluted environment.



Figure 4: Aspects of Sustainability Consumers Look For (2021-2022)



(Montgomery, 2022)

According to the graph above, it can be seen how much the change of opinion among customers was after just one year, i.e. in the period between (2021-2022). In a way, this is in a certain way expected, because of the UN goals for 2030, and also because of the moral awareness of customers who are considered responsible for the state of the planet Earth, and thus their awareness dictates that they invest in what will pay off for them one day in the future. The very fact that a man's small step can improve his future or that of his successors sounds interesting and worthwhile. Interestingly it can be seen from the graph above the positive trend toward a more sustainable lifestyle among consumers (Montgomery, 2022). The aspects that customers mostly look for when it comes to the sustainability are materials, the packaging of the products, as well as the ingredients that are used for making the products (Montgomery, 2022). This is a huge indicator that shows positive change meaning that consumers are nowadays much more aware of what they consume. Also, the product's recyclability is seen as an important factor, and the product's origin which also plays a huge role during the buying process (Montgomery, 2022).

### 3.5. Consumer Behavior Theory

Human behavior is subject to various changes when coming into contact with various everyday situations. How someone behaves and what factors influence such behavior is very important to investigate because consumers are one of the most valuable weapons today, especially when it comes to the sustainability segment (Srivastava *et al.*, 2022). They are the ones who, in a way, "decide" the fate of the companies, because by purchasing or not purchasing, they give their opinion on a certain product. There are various factors that can affect the acceptability or repugnance of a certain product, and all of this can be observed through the factors that determine consumer behavior. Social, personal, psychological, and cultural factors are presented as basic factors that have their own divisions on the basis of which people can be segmented (Kotler and Keller, 2012). Before making any product and placing it on the market, companies segment consumers based on the factors they choose in order to target a specific group that is suitable for using and buying their product. Specifically, for the purpose of this research, personal factors (gender, age, lifestyle, and income) that can influence customers attitudes regarding the sustainably packaged beauty products and which are different for each person according to their lifestyle will be investigated.

#### 3.5.1. Gender

Analyzing the male and female sexes, one can see how much both sexes actually have some similarities and differences that are very obvious. Since ancient times, each gender had its own role in the household and society, which was specific to the gender to which a person belongs (Brumfiel and Robin, 2008). With new changes and revolutions, these roles and behaviors have changed greatly in many parts of the world, and now the most talked about is gender equality in various spheres of life.

When talking about the beauty industry, in the past it was mostly reserved for women and all efforts were focused on promoting the beauty of women through cosmetic products. Nowadays, taking care of themselves and their appearance is not only a reflection of a person's hygiene, but also a reflection of taking care of one's body, and cosmetics is not something that nowadays belongs exclusively to one gender. As nowadays it has become irrelevant whether someone is male or female, the rules have begun to apply that both sexes should take care of themselves without man's remorse that they will be the object of ridicule in the society (Ren, Zhang and Gao, 2022). Although this is fortunately a practice in countries around the world, in Bosnia and Herzegovina it can be said that the society is still somewhat traditional, however, it is noticeable that the newer generations of men massively follow world trends and implement such trends here.

While it used to be funny to talk about how a man uses face or body care products, today on social networks people can see various male influencers from Bosnia and Herzegovina who promote the use of skin care products for men. Influencers are known for influencing people

to use certain products or in some way encouraging them to adopt new habits (Ghaffar *et al.*, 2023). Although in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is still a type of society that makes fun of such trends, it is important to emphasize that every beginning is difficult and that perhaps by constantly dragging out such topics, important steps can be taken so that skincare for men is not “taboo” topic anymore in this country. With this, it is safe to say that it no longer matters if someone is male or female because everyone wants healthy and well-groomed skin.

As far as women are concerned, it is common knowledge that women today are more knowledgeable about cosmetic products than ever, they pay special attention to what kind of cosmetics they use, what their composition is, and whether it suits their skin type. The time has come when it's kind of a "shame" not to be groomed, considering how many beauty products are offered and how much the beauty market actually grows every year (Statista, 2024).

The new era has led to the fact that through social networks, both women and men can be informed about various novelties in the beauty industry, but also receive fair or unfair reviews of others related to all kinds of products (Bharucha, 2018). Likewise, women as partners can pretty much influence their partners to use skincare, which is also one of the trends that is regularly displayed on social networks. Women as mothers and men as fathers can have an extreme influence on their children when it comes to the use of beauty products, and they can point out what is good and what is not, especially when talking about sustainable products, they can also make it easier for children the buying process because somewhere in the subconscious they will already have in mind what is good and what is not good for them and their skin.

Also, mothers, as someone who mainly takes care of babies, play a very important role in the health of their babies when choosing skin care products, because by choosing products that are made from natural ingredients and under sustainable processes, they can maintain healthy baby skin, while by choosing products which contain undesirable materials, such as talc, etc., can have a negative effect on the baby's skin and may cause some undesirable reactions on their skin.

It can be said that the need to preserve health and a healthy appearance gained importance after the world was faced with the coronavirus (Ścieszko *et al.*, 2021). It is definitely a period in which people around the world became concerned about themselves and their health and began to include healthier habits in their lives that they might not have imagined before. However, as important as it is to use good products, care should also be taken to ensure that the products used are sustainable, both in terms of composition and packaging, in order to benefit the health of themselves and the environment. Both men and women must educate themselves on which products are suitable for them before use because there is no cosmetic product that is equally suitable for every skin type since many skin types exist, and each one of them should be treated differently.

### 3.5.2. Age

Every age is unique, special and has some of its own characteristics, the same is the case with people of different generations, i.e. years. There are several types of generations, namely: Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y (Millennials), and Generation Z (Bejtkovský, 2016). Each of these generations has some characteristic that distinguishes it from the other, whether it is a way of thinking, style, belief, or anything. which can be a potential difference between them.

Specifically, for this research, Millennials and Generation Z will be analyzed. Millennials are unique in that they are in a way members of the past and the new century, and their way of thinking and their view of the world has been greatly affected by various changes (Lancaster and Stillman, 2009). One of these changes is the emergence of the Internet, which in some way gave rise to the various things that marked and changed the whole world. With the arrival of these various changes, the Millennials also had to adapt to such changes and to enter the world of technology in order to progress in their lives, and not to remain isolated from the technological environment. As consumers, they are a very desirable group because they are mostly people who are employed, who know brands, who can use both online and offline stores without problems, and who are willing to spend money and enjoy life (Moreno *et al.*, 2017).

Generation Z is simply a generation that is susceptible to new trends, a generation that learned to use the phone sooner than to write, and a typical generation of the 21st century (Francis and Hoefel, 2018). This generation is said to be a generation that is still developing, but it is also a generation that is much more susceptible to the opinions of other people than is perhaps the case with other generations. Although they seem like a generation that doesn't really care about the world around them, it has been proven that they are actually the generation that cares the most about sustainability (Dabija, Bejan and Dinu, 2019). Along with them, the second generation that also cares a lot about the sustainability are the Millennials (Bollani, Bonadonna and Peira, 2019). This is to some extent the reason why these two groups were selected as respondents of this research because both generations are sustainably aware, but each has its own characteristics that can influence how much they actually care about sustainability, as well as what their opinion is about it.

### 3.5.3. Lifestyle

Lifestyle greatly affects each person and describes their actions or reactions. It is important to understand that everyone lives the way that suits them and that it is not nice to judge others if they live a different way of life than others. Individuals live a certain way of life from birth because it was instilled in them from a young age, while there are people who with age, development, or by following new trends can change their way of life from the roots and sometimes in later years do what they may never have done before (Tessier *et al.*, 2023). Everything depends on the person and his decision on how he wants to live in this world and

what his priorities are. While some prioritize caring for the environment, others prioritize "enjoying" life without caring about how their actions might affect the world around them in the long run. What is definite is that with the advent of sustainability, many people have adjusted their lifestyle and started living a more sustainable way of life, if only because of fear, but also because society or the state imposes such behavior on them (Febriani, 2023). Such a way of life implies exceptional care for nature, both in action and in selection when purchasing. Sustainable lifestyle means taking into account the extent to which natural resources are actually damaged by products that humans use, and that products that cause enormous damage to nature are not used at all if possible.

Also, people who are supporters of a sustainable lifestyle pay close attention to the appearance, the way the products are obtained, i.e. from what ingredients, and also take into account what their life cycle is like, i.e. whether such products can be recycled after their use (Zhang and Zhao, 2012). In contrast, there are people who live an unsustainable lifestyle and for whom perhaps sustainability is not crucial when choosing a product, but some other characteristics are looked at. It is also somewhat normal that a person belonging to Generation Z does not have a similar lifestyle to a person from the Millennial generation. Each of these generations is unique to itself and they simply have some differences in addition to age, which is why they are divided into two groups.

Generation Z is said to be the children of this age, fully technologically aware, familiar with the Internet, and in a way, they are the ones who bring the trend to their society because they use social networks and the Internet on a daily basis within easy reach of new sources and trends that may yet be accepted (Francis and Hoefel, 2018). Likewise, members of Generation Z are young girls and boys who are becoming more aware of the importance of taking care of their face and body, and considering their youth, they are willing to try various products. Unfortunately, members of Generation Z can sometimes be quite naive when buying various beauty products, mostly not paying attention to the quality of the product but to the price of the same, and can have bad consequences. This is in a certain way normal considering that they are young people who maybe don't possess their own money, so they are depending on someone.

Millennials, on the other hand, are much more conscientious and mature, which is logical in a way, and before buying, they study the product they want to buy in order to make sure that it is worth investing money in it and that they are not the subject of fraud (Phau and Woo, 2008). The same applies when it comes to accepting new trends, where Millennials are much more cautious than Generation Z and are very careful about how accepting such a trend will actually affect their everyday life.

It can be said that these generations are quite different, but what connects them to a great extent is the new trend of sustainability, which, regardless of age, is increasingly accepted by both members of one and the other generation, at least those who think conscientiously and are aware of their procedures and their impact on the environment.

#### 3.5.4. Income

In today's time with the presence of inflation around the world, it can be comfortably said that unfortunately, money dictates everything. How an individual lives, what he lives on, and how many people he shares his income with greatly affects his behavior and lifestyle. While some people cannot even afford the basic necessities of life, others live a wasteful lifestyle. People who simply have lower incomes and less secure jobs cannot afford some things that people with higher incomes and better jobs can, which is logical in a way. Many factors enter a person's income, among others are education, work experience, and additional activities or attributes that the person owns (Wang and Shen, 2017).

It is also important to take into account that the income in a highly developed European country cannot be compared with the income in Bosnia and Herzegovina and that this may be the reason why people living in highly developed countries are perhaps more willing to give extra money for luxury and products that do not belong to the group of basic foodstuffs.

Looking at the generations, it can be said that Millennials are generally much more financially stable than members of Generation Z. The reason for this is that Millennials are already accomplished people with longer work experience who are not dependent on others and can afford the products they want. In the same way, most Millennials may live in a married union, and together with their partner they share income and acquire the products they need, and this is a much easier case if both people are well-off. When talking about sustainable beauty products, it is considered that income largely dictates the behavior of consumers and their willingness to buy them, because in most cases such products are more expensive than some products that may be cheaper, but their impact on the environment has disastrous consequences in the long term (Bhaskaran *et al.*, 2006).

On the other hand, Generation Z includes young people who are somehow still in the development phase of their life path or there are exceptions that may have already been achieved, but the majority of this generation is still financially dependent on their parents, and if their family is not at all wealthy, they do not have the means to afford some products that are more expensive than some basic ones. An individual's income greatly affects his purchasing power and for this reason was chosen as a factor to be observed during this research among respondents in order to examine their possibilities of purchasing sustainable products and what attitudes they have towards them in general.

### 3.6. Cue-Utilization Theory

What is characteristic of people as well as consumers is that they pay a lot of attention to the signs that are shown to them both accidentally and perhaps intentionally (Wang *et al.*, 2022). Signs are what can somehow attract the attention of a person, i.e. a customer. During their purchasing process, today's consumers are subject to various signs/cues that can have a great influence on how their purchase will end (Kakaria, Simonetti and Bigne, 2023). These cues

can be external such as product packaging, product price, etc., and internal such as product ingredients, etc. (Wang *et al.*, 2022). Specifically, in this case, it refers to signs that can motivate or demotivate customers to try certain products, to buy them, or similar. Various global beauty companies have been working for years to be recognizable by something that is unique to them and that can at first remind their customers of them.

In today's mass of both old and new beauty companies and their products, it is very difficult to be or to become authentic because many beauty products look alike, and there are also many copies of famous brands that somehow use the same branding characteristics to stand out. That is one of the reasons why nowadays customers sometimes find it very hard to believe in a certain brand and to recognize it among many others available on the market.

What is certain is that the effort of companies to be authentic in something is what actually distinguishes them from other players on the market, and although it is a very difficult job that can happen anytime or never, a company that gains ease of recognition among customers is definitely one that will in some way have a competitive advantage over its competitors on the market (Gong *et al.*, 2023). When talking about the signs that make it easier for customers to make a decision to buy a certain product, it is important to say that there are various types of them and that companies meaningfully "create" signs, i.e. information that helps customers decide to buy a certain product (Dodds, 1995).

Specifically, in this work, the focus will be on the external cues (packaging and price cues) of sustainable beauty products that can attract the attention of customers and encourage them or not to buy them.

### 3.6.1. Packaging Cues

Almost everything that is represented in supermarkets and drugstores today is in some kind of packaging. It can be said that the packaging is actually in some way a link between the customers and the brand (Underwood, 2003). If the consumer hastily buys products, it is not a novelty that sometimes they will choose such a product solely on the basis of an aesthetic or sustainable style of packaging, while some products that do not have adequate or aesthetically designed packaging will be left aside even if they are sustainable. How the packaging of a particular product looks can greatly affect whether customers will notice it or not.

The beauty industry is something that has been given a lot of focus in recent years, and it is a market that is growing year after year, which is predicted to be the case in the future as well (Statista, 2024). What has definitely been a hallmark of the beauty industry lately is sustainability, as well as aesthetics, which companies are working hard on and using new technologies to create the most effective packaging for beauty products (Ghaffar *et al.*, 2023).

Color, size, design, shape, composition and method of obtaining the product as well as packaging, country of origin, and the brand name are some of the packaging cues that greatly influence the choice of the same and are the basis of what the consumer can conclude about the brand at first glance (Srivastava *et al.*, 2022). The first thing that today's customer will notice about an unknown brand is the appearance of the packaging, which may or may not attract them, depending on their preferences for the product (Asim *et al.*, 2022).

Nowadays, people can sometimes be convinced that the welfare of a product is basically irrelevant if a company has designed packaging that is modern, innovative and pleasing to the eye. But what is really a trend in today's beauty industry is sustainability, which is related to the fact that both the product and the packaging are made from the sustainable materials, by which usage companies do not have a negative impact on the environment and support the process of sustainable energy and recycling (Ghaffar *et al.*, 2023).

There are various packaging signs that can show the customer that the product and its packaging are in line with sustainability. Of course, it is important to understand that many factors influence what the consumer will choose, as well as the fact that each person has his own way of thinking and evaluation in the process of buying beauty products.

Taking into account the trend of sustainability, it is safe to say that nowadays a product that is sustainable, aesthetic, functional and somehow affordable is very well received by customers.

Table 4: Types of packaging cues and its description

Type of Packaging Cue	Description
Packaging Colors (Srivastava <i>et al.</i> , 2022)	Colors are what definitely draws attention to what represents them. Different colors have different effects on the people and each color has its own speciality and the meaning (Chu and Rahman, 2010). It can be said that when talking about a sustainable product, the most popular color that somehow lets people know that it is a sustainable product is green, which indicates that something is related to the nature (Chu and Rahman, 2010). Color, simply by its appearance, can attract or not attract a customer from buying a product, and it is very important for brands to investigate out what kind of color affects human psychology before placing their product on the market.
	Each package has a different shape in order to make it easier for customers to recognize it, and it also comes in the different sizes. Sometimes a product can really attract customers with its aesthetics, because many people look at this aspect as well as the functionality of the product when



Size of the Packaging and shape (Srivastava <i>et al.</i> , 2022)	buying it (Srivastava <i>et al.</i> , 2022). Many companies nowadays pay huge attention to this aspect and take care that the product is pleasing to the eye in order to do well job and attract customers to buy it.
Country of Origin (Srivastava <i>et al.</i> , 2022)	The place of the origin is something that can also attract and repel customers from the product because such an aspect can be viewed from the several sides. If the country of the origin of the product is one that may be hated by the customer and whose products are maybe currently boycotted, that product can be immediately rejected by such a customer regardless of its functionality and benefits. If the buyer has a good opinion about the country of origin, the situation will be different. Likewise, in the beauty industry there are some leaders when it comes to countries that produce beauty products and whose products are valued precisely because of the country they come from (Cecere, Izzo and Terraferma, 2022). Examples of such countries are: South Korea, France, Germany, etc (Cecere, Izzo and Terraferma, 2022).
Brand Reputation (Srivastava <i>et al.</i> , 2022)	Beauty brands through their various practices and businesses can create a good and bad image of themselves. Dedicated brands are highly valued by the customers, especially if the products are of high quality as well as the way of obtaining them. Many beauty brands could serve as an example of how not to build a name because of the various scandals they had because of their way of doing business (Kahraman and Kazançoğlu, 2019). Brand reputation is something that is a very important factor for customers when buying beauty products, and the product packaging of a brand whose reputation is valued is something that is easily recognizable by customers.
Pictures on the packaging (Srivastava <i>et al.</i> , 2022)	Different images or animations, just like colors, can evoke different feelings in customers (Underwood and Klein, 2002). Pictures of the ingredients or any that can trigger some good emotion in customers are welcome on every sustainable beauty product packaging to attract customers' attention (Srivastava <i>et al.</i> , 2022).
	Ingredients are something that can go unnoticed or noticed, it all depends on what kind of the customer profile it is buying. If it is a customer who follows trends in the beauty

<p>Product                      Ingridients (Srivastava <i>et al.</i>, 2022)</p>	<p>industry, he will be well aware of what ingredients are acceptable and what are not when it comes to sustainable products and packaging. Sometimes people have a wrong perception about the sustainable packaging of beauty products, and do not think that packaging of this type can have beautiful packaging, because due to ignorance they have prejudices that such ingredients from which the packaging was obtained are not of sufficient quality and do not preserve the product well. Likewise, if when reading the list of product ingredients, they notice ingredients that they think are not good for their skin, this may very well have an impact on whether they will buy such a product or not (Alevizou, 2021).</p>
<p>Eco-label (Ischen <i>et al.</i>, 2022)</p>	<p>The Eco-label is a symbol that emphasizes how sustainably acceptable the packaging and the product itself are, and indicates that it complies with all the necessary sustainability guidelines (Cervellon and Carey, 2020). For users who don't care that much about sustainability, a sign like this might not have much impact. While for customers who live a "sustainable" lifestyle, a badge like this can be decisive in whether they will buy that beauty product or not (Cervellon and Carey, 2020).</p>

(Made by author, 2024)

### 3.6.2. Price Cues

In the current era of inflation caused by various world events, product prices largely dictate their acceptance, especially in countries that struggle with inflation harder than some of the more developed ones. In particular, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, inflation plays a big role and affects the citizens a lot, considering that it is a country that is just developing, but also considering the salaries of citizens, which are still quite low compared to the standard of the developed countries, and it can be said that for individuals the basic necessities of life are currently a luxury (Rate, 2023). However, also according to statistical data, people in Bosnia and Herzegovina have turned to the trend of sustainability, which promotes natural beauty products, and what they are also interested in is their impact on the environment, which is a great progress for this country (Statista, 2024).

Price cues are widely used by various cosmetic brands to differentiate themselves or have better tactics than their competitors (Anderson and Simester, 2009). It can be said that the price is a double-edged sword. While for individuals the goal of buying a product is that such a product is as cheap as possible, not caring so much about what makes it up, for other

individuals sometimes a lower price of a cosmetic product can mean a lower quality of such a cosmetic product because they immediately associate that what is cheap is not good and doesn't contain high quality ingredients (Parvin and Chowdhury, 2006). Depending on the way of the life he/she leads, on the consumer income as well as on his/hers priorities, today the consumer is able to choose which beauty products he/she wants or does not want to have in his/hers beauty collection.

When talking about the price, it can be said that it largely dictates to individuals whether they will buy a certain product or not. The price is something that, in addition to the packaging and the product itself, attracts or does not attract the customers. This is especially an important factor for customers who may not be familiar with the brand and product, and buy random products, because if they see a similar product for less money, they may still decide on that cheaper product, regardless of whether it is sustainable or not. It can also be the opposite, i.e. that people who actually support sustainability during a random purchase choose instead of the previous non-sustainable product the one that is sustainable even though its price may be higher (Wei, Ang and Jancenelle, 2018).

Although people buy according to their lifestyle habits, when it comes to the sustainable beauty products, it can be said that the expensiveness or cheapness of such a product will certainly have a greater effect on a person who may not live a sustainable lifestyle, while on people who live a sustainable lifestyle life, the product must have some other sustainable attributes that that person recognizes in addition to the price (Wei, Ang and Janecenelle, 2018). It is also very likely that people living a sustainable lifestyle will find the price acceptable as long as the product and packaging are sustainable and comply with all the necessary sustainability guidelines.

## **4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1. Research Aim**

The aim of this research was to investigate how much are consumers familiar with the sustainability concept in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as to understand consumer attitudes toward sustainable packaged beauty products in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and factors that have influenced the purchase of such packaged beauty products.

Therefore, these were the main objectives of this master's thesis:

- Investigate how familiar consumers are with sustainably packaged beauty products
- Understand which factors support the purchase of sustainably packaged beauty products
- Understand which factors discourage the purchase of sustainably packaged beauty products

- Discover what role packaging cues play in the process of buying sustainably packaged beauty products
- Discover what role price cues play in the process of buying sustainably packaged beauty products

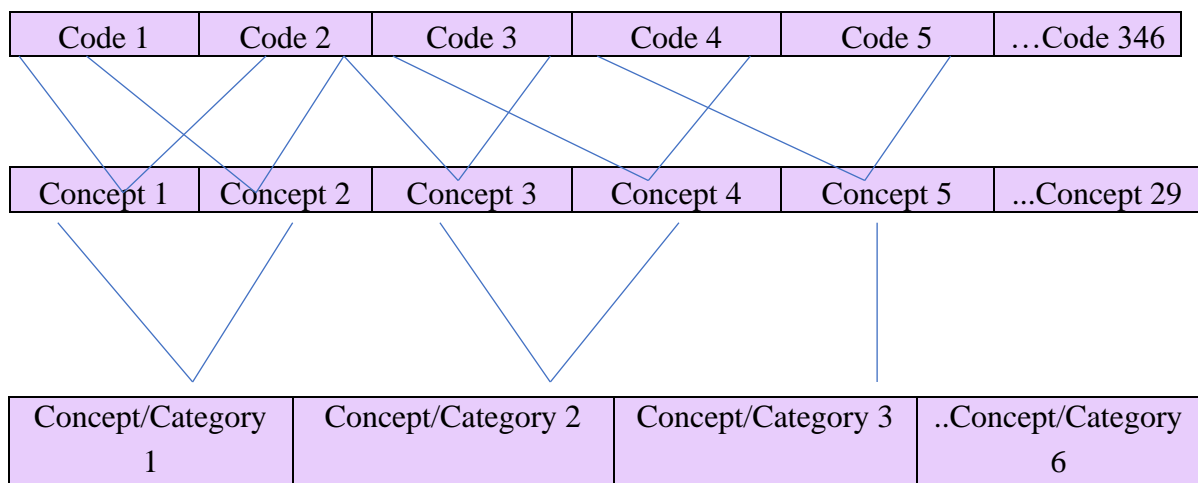
#### 4.2. Research Design

To properly achieve the stated goals of this research and to answer the research questions, qualitative research in the form of semi-structured in-depth interviews is useful (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). This interview method was used so that respondents could give comprehensive answers and express their views without any prompting. A total of 10 male and female participants from Generation Z and Millennials were interviewed. The interviewees were all from Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the same time, the prerequisite for the participants to participate in the interview was that they use at least some of the cosmetic products.

In order for the interview to be conducted in an ethical and reliable manner, the interviewees were informed before the interview that the interview would be anonymous and that they would be recorded with a voice recorder during the interview, but that they would be recorded exclusively so that an adequate transcript of their spoken words could be made on which all participants agreed to.

Initially, the researcher made a transcript of all the interviews, then micro coding was done in an Excel table, and then those codes were transferred to first and finally second-order concepts that became categories that explain the analysis of this research.

Figure 5: The process of getting Categories for the analysis



(Made by author, 2024)

### 4.3. Research Findings and Analysis

Table 5: The analysis of each category

Usage of Beauty Products	Consumers Knowledge about Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products	Personal Factors Affecting Consumption of Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products	Sustainability Approach of BiH Towards Beauty Brands	The level of Sustainability in Bosnia and Herzegovina	(De)Motivational Factors that Affect the Purchase of Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products
Usage of Beauty Products	Description of Sustainable Product	Living/Not Living Sustainable Lifestyle	Sustainable Packaging Brands Used	Consumers Awareness about Sustainable Practices	Factors that Motivate Purchase of Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products
Skin Type	Description of Sustainable Packaging	Gender Relevance in Consuming Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products	Unsustainable Packaging Brands Used	Country Sustainable/Unsustainable Practices	Factors that Demotivate the Purchase of Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products
Cream Application Purpose	Usage of Sustainable Packaging	Women Awareness about Sustainable Practices	Availability of Companies that sell Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products		Influence that the Price of the Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products has on Purchase
	Experience with Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products	Men's Awareness about Sustainable Practices	Companies in Bosnia and Herzegovina where consumers can buy Sustainable Packaged beauty Products		
	Importance of Packaging Being Sustainable	Millenials Awareness about Sustainability	Companies that sell Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products that are not available in Bosnia and Herzegovina but consumers like them		
	Quality of Sustainable vs Unsustainable Packaging	Generation Z Awareness about Sustainability	Companies action to promote better the usage of Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products		
	Price and Quality Connection	Lifestyle effect on consumption of sustainable packaged beauty products			
		Income effect on consumption of sustainable packaged beauty products			

(Made by author, 2024)

## Category I: Usage of Beauty Products

Through interviews, the participants described the way in which they apply the beauty products, why they use them, and when they apply them. Both men and women mostly stated that they apply beauty products almost every day, depending on their needs, while few individuals said that they use beauty products more than once a day.

*“After every bath, I wash myself with a gel and apply a cream for dry and atopic skin that does not contain chemicals.”* (Nikola- PC1) Code: Skin Type

*“I use cosmetic products every day.”* (Nikola-PC1) Code: Usage of Beauty Products

*“My typical routine primarily refers to cosmetic products for facial care, i.e. cleansing the face and body. I apply moisturizing creams that protects my skin and makes it more beautiful.”* (Nikolina- PC2) Code: Cream Application Purpose

## Category II: Consumers Knowledge about Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products

This category was chosen to discover consumer knowledge regarding Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products. Through their response, participants expressed their opinions about Sustainable Packaged beauty Products and they mostly shared their experience with the usage of such products.

Q2: Can you explain what, in your opinion, are sustainably packaged cosmetic products?

*“I know that now creams are made without any animal origin, in any case, I primarily associate them with protecting the environment and everything that affects us.”* (Elvir-PC3)  
Code: Description of Sustainable Product

*“This means packaging that is made of recycled material, but not only packaging, but also products that we use that are biodegradable, we can often find them in brands such as Lush.”*  
(Nikolina-PC2) Code: Description of Sustainable Packaging

It was discovered that most consumers are trying to use sustainable packaging in their everyday lives, however, this aspect would need much more improvement in the future.

Sub-question: Is the packaging of the beauty products you use sustainable?

*“In 60% of cases it is sustainable, there are also other products that are still not sustainable.”* (Nikolina-PC2) Code: Usage of Sustainable Packaging

Most of them had positive experiences with the usage of such products and some of them had negative experiences connected to malfunction of the packaging of sustainable packaged beauty products.

*“So far, I have not had any negative experience when using sustainably packaged beauty products.”* (Alina- PC4) Code: Experience with Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products

*“As for the product, I didn't, I had problems with the functionality. When I had a sustainable toothbrush, it used to happen that the bits from the brush fell out of the package, and this deodorant that I use sometimes has malfunctions that make it more difficult to use.”* (Alija- PC5) Code: Experience with Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products

Then consumers were talking of how important is to them that the packaging of the beauty products that they use is sustainable.

Q11: How important is it to you that the packaging of your beauty products complies with sustainable practices?

*“It is important to me because of the way of life and the better future of our planet, given the witnessing of different climate phenomena that are absolutely not good for humanity.”* (Nikolina- PC2) Code: Importance of Packaging Being Sustainable

Also through their responses, participants shared their opinions about the quality of the sustainable vs unsustainable packaged beauty products as well as they had expressed their attitude toward the price and quality connection when buying beauty products.

Q13: What is your opinion on the quality of the packaging of sustainably packaged beauty products if you compare it with the packaging of unsustainable beauty products?

*“I honestly don't see any excessive difference between the two packages, I use both.”* (Alina- PC4) Code: Quality of Sustainable vs Unsustainable Packaging

While many of them didn't have negative experiences, some of them had it and they shared their experience.

*“I think that sustainable products still have room for development. If we consider the quality, I think the quality of unsustainable products is still higher because they had much more time to develop quality.”* (Alija- PC5) Code: Quality of Sustainable vs Unsustainable Packaging

Q16: What is your opinion regarding the connection between the price and the quality of sustainably packaged cosmetic products?

*“I think it depends on the materials from which cosmetic products and packaging are made. Sometimes cheaper products excite me more than some that are more expensive, and sometimes you can really see the reason why one product is more expensive than another.”* (Alina PC-4) Code: Price and Quality Connection

Most of the participants said that a higher price doesn't always mean higher quality, however, some of them said that a higher price usually represents higher quality.

*“From my perspective, I would say that quality always requires a higher cost. A product that is mass produced, I think, is probably also of lower quality. I think we should be ready to pay the extra cost because if our goal is to buy something that is of high quality and sustainable, we will pay for it.”* (Miran-PC6) Code: Price and Quality Connection

### Category III: Personal Factors Affecting Consumption of Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products

Through this category, the consumer’s personal factors (Lifestyle, Age, Gender, and Income) that can affect the consumption of Sustainable Packaged Beauty products were investigated.

Q4: In what way do you think that your lifestyle or more precisely your awareness of the environment, affects the type of cosmetic products you buy?

*“Essentially, my way of life was set up in such a way that from a young age I strove for more natural things, a more natural look and way of life. It wasn't even strange for me that growing up I started using products that were in line with that.”* (Nikolina-PC2) Code: Living/not Living Sustainable Lifestyle

For some participants that are living sustainable lifestyle, the purchase of sustainable packaged beauty products was usually the choice. Still, there were also the participants that were not having that much of a sustainable lifestyle and that habit had impacted their ignorance towards the purchase of sustainable packaged beauty products or the percentage of such purchase was at 50%.

*“If you look at a certain way of life, I think it will affect shopping in general. As I said, 50% of it is my way of life, so it's not my first thought when buying a product.”* (Amira-PC7) Code: Lifestyle Effect on Consumption of Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products

Q5: In what way do you think your gender plays a role in purchasing sustainably packaged cosmetic products?

*“Until recently, I thought that it had a big role, that is, I thought that women are the ones who will turn to buying this type of product since they are the ones who use them the most in the house. What I notice is that the newer generations, especially the male gender, are more and more frequently educated about the very sustainable future and energy efficiency. We can already see the male gender paying attention to the products they use and their ingredients.”* (Nikolina- PC2) Code: Gender Relevance in Consuming Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products

*“I think that the female gender watches it a lot more and gets informed and reads about it a lot more. I think the male gender looks more at what function the product should fulfill.”* (Amira-PC7) Code: Women’s Awareness of Sustainable Practices

When it comes to analyzing genders, women were mostly described as ones who use sustainable packaged beauty products and were presented as the ones who play role in their



family and buy products for their partners while when it comes to the male gender, they want the process of purchase to be quick, the product to be functional, and they don't care that much about the sustainability as women. Also, the availability of sustainable packaged beauty products is on a much higher level for women than it is the case for men.

*"I would say that mostly women are responsible for buying cosmetics. When I enter DM I mostly see women, maybe a few men. I would say that it all depends on whether one gender is educated at all. As a representative of men, I don't care so much about sustainability, while my girlfriend is more involved in it, i.e. she has more empathy for it."* (Miran-PC6)  
Code: Men's Awareness of Sustainable Practices

Q6. In what way do you think your age plays a role in buying sustainably packaged cosmetic products?

*"In general, age plays a big role because I'm already thinking in a silent way what I will leave in the future for my children, it's not so much about personal interest, but about how much of a role my current decisions will have on the future. I definitely think about it more now than I did when I was younger."* (Miran-PC6) Code: Millennial's Awareness about Sustainability

*"I think that the younger generations are much more informed and that social media have also had a greater influence on the preoccupation of the mind with what I actually buy, whether it is ecologically sustainable or not."* (Amira-PC7) Code: Generation Z Awareness about Sustainability

There is not to much difference between the Millennials and Generation Z when it comes to their opinion about consuming sustainable packaged beauty products. The difference is that younger generations are more informed through social media about sustainability and are mostly influenced by trends, and if something is a trend they will follow it. The Millennials are thinking about sustainability more than Generation Z because Millennials are already thinking about what will they leave on this planet for their heirs, and they like to take care about their health.

Q7: What role does your income play when buying sustainably packaged beauty products?

*"I think it has a crucial role, especially in the country we live in, considering the standard and average incomes. I think that they are products of sustainable packaging and that people who do not have such high incomes do not even think about buying them."* (Amira-PC7)  
Code: Income effect on Consumption of Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products

*"I have no income at the moment, I get money from my parents. I believe that income plays a role because quality cosmetic products and sustainable packaging can cost more than regular cosmetic products, so sometimes it can play a role, it all depends on what I bought before and whether I have enough money."* (Alina-PC4) Code: Income Effect on Consumption of Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products

The Income as a personal factor is also something worth mentioning when comparing Generation Z and Millennials. While Income certainly has a role in the purchase of sustainable packaged beauty products, Millennials would be willing to spend a certain amount of money on them because of many factors that were previously mentioned. Generation Z is limited in income because most of them do not have jobs and depend on their allowance from their parents, and that is the factor that can play a role taking into account that not everyone has enough allowance to afford sustainable packaged beauty products.

#### Category IV: Sustainability approach of BiH towards Beauty Brands

This category was very important because by it, the opinions from the participants about the availability of companies that sell Sustainable Packaged beauty Products were given as well as the information on what brand of beauty products do they use and if it is sustainable or not.

Q10. What is your opinion on the availability of companies that sell sustainably packaged cosmetic products and that incorporate sustainability into their business in Bosnia and Herzegovina?

*“I think that in Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially in Sarajevo, there is a lack of such companies, I think that abroad there are much better and much larger offers of brands that offer such cosmetic products.”* (Alina-PC4) Code: Availability of Companies that sell Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products

While some participants were not that much aware of the companies that sell sustainable packaged beauty products in BiH, others had the opinion that in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are plenty of them available. Many participants stated that better and of higher quality sustainable packaged beauty products can mostly be found abroad.

*“I think there are plenty of such companies available in Bosnia and Herzegovina.”* (Zorana-PC8) Code: Availability of Companies that Sell Sustainable packaged Beauty Products

*“We have a DM that has such products and there is also a Lush store that sells natural products and they have benefits if 5 packs of used products are taken to their store for recycling.”* (Alina-PC4) Code: Companies in Bosnia and Herzegovina where consumers can buy Sustainable Packaged Beauty products

*“Some of my favorite beauty brands are Rituals and Charlotte Tilbury, which are not available in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but I often travel and I like that when I buy a product from them, later I just keep buying a refill, which is cheaper and which reduces the harm of making new packaging for nature .”* (Alina-PC4) Code: Companies that sell Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products that are not available in BiH but consumers like them

*“I know the Am Apothecary brand that makes homemade herbal products, I use them as a deodorant in a cream and a fragrance in a balm that they pack in aluminum containers that*

*when they are used up you can take them to them and get the same product for a lower price. I also know products that are made in double packaging, for example, one type of Mello lip balm comes in a container that can be used for other purposes after the product is used up.”* (Zorana-PC8) Code: Sustainable Packaging Brands Used

*“Mainly Nivea.”* (Elvir-PC9) Code: Unsustainable Packaging Brands Used

There were differences between the respondents in terms of the type of cosmetic product packaging they use. While some declared that they use unsustainable packaging, the rest declared that they use sustainable ones. What was noticeable was that those who stated that they use non-sustainable packaging or a small percentage of sustainable ones mostly did so because they did not find a sustainable alternative that suits them or they are not so aware of sustainability.

Sub-Question: Do you think that sustainably packaged beauty products should be more affordable or part of promotion so that they are used more?

*“That would be very good. It would be good if there were a bigger label for such products, for example, as there is a flag of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the shape of the state for domestic products, I think it would be very important if they had such things on environmentally conscious packaging. DM could also include a coupon for environmentally conscious packaging once a month or a year, or maybe put April as the month where that coupon is valid considering Earth Day (April 22).”* (Zorana-PC8) Code: Companies actions to promote better the usage of Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products

*“I think there are several ways that brands could do, and that is to insert some QR code during their advertising so that people can connect with the campaigns and have an insight into how much they are helping the environment when buying such products. When they are already advertising digitally, they can to be fenced off with advertisements that are a way of monetization and to use that level of income to reduce prices, that is, to reduce the margin with digital consumerism, that is, what I will check on the Internet and find out more about that tomorrow and bring me some subsidy on the product itself. Efforts should be made to subsidize sustainably packaged cosmetic products in some way. Similarly, the state can do something if it is a local product, it can introduce it into some of its budget, so if we are going to support that type of purchase, I think the government should have goal to promote such products.”* (Miran-PC6) Code: Companies Actions to Promote Better Usage of Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products

Some participants had very good ideas that could be very useful to companies that produce cosmetic products because their encouragement is also very important so that consumers would be more willing to use sustainably packaged cosmetic products and to somehow raise their awareness.

## Category V: The level of sustainability in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Through this category, the examination about the level of awareness of consumers in Bosnia and Herzegovina about sustainability, as well as how the state reacts to the trend of sustainability and what opportunities it offers to consumers.

Sub-question: Do you consider your everyday life a sustainable way of life?

*“Realistically, I don't think it's anything spectacular. In general, we are not aware of how much is in our environment every day in terms of garbage disposal, products that are not recycled, but should be. The very way we throw away plastic and all those things, I don't think is sustainable, because in the future we will have situations where that garbage is found in our waters, forests and in the city where that garbage is picked up and thrown in a landfill outside the city.”* (Miran-PC6) Code: Consumers Awareness about Sustainable Practice

*“In most cases, I think it's because I try to use and be part of a sustainable future as much as possible, and thus I recycle, I use materials that have been recycled, I take care of waste separation, and I try to make part of my everyday life sustainable. Sometimes I succeed in this, sometimes not, considering the environment in which I live and the social lack of awareness about sustainability.”* (Nikolina-PC2) Code: Consumers Awareness about Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products

Mostly, the participants answered that they try to live and behave sustainably every day, however, most of them said that in the country where they live, sustainable practices are not so prevalent and that consumers are not at all aware of sustainability and recycling. Many believe that sustainability would be at a higher level, both for them and for others, if some changes took place at the state level.

Q4: In what way do you think that your lifestyle, or more precisely your awareness of the environment, affects the type of cosmetic products you buy?

*“To tell you the truth, I don't really think about it, I don't pay that much attention to recycling, but not because I'm not aware that we need to recycle, but in some way we're unable to recycle because we don't have a very well-designed waste separation system.”* (Nikola-PC1) Code: Country Sustainable/Unsustainable Practices

Sub-question: Do you mean as in general in Bosnia and Herzegovina or?

*“I think that in general we don't have a raised awareness of recycling and we don't have enough bins where we can separate plastic, glass, paper, etc. There are a few such bins, but that is inaccessible to me. It's not worth it for me to go and carry garbage to those containers.”* (Nikola-PC1) Code: Country Sustainable/Unsustainable Practices

Sub-question: Do you think that in the future, if some actions by producers and companies were implemented at the state level to increase awareness of sustainability, your demand for sustainably packaged cosmetic products would also increase?

*“Yes, now I will give you one example. In the neighborhood where I live, we don't have standard collective containers, but each house gets its own container, and a truck comes on a weekly basis to buy that garbage. If the state would give us 3 such containers each (for glass, paper, plastic, possibly a fourth for other waste) then I would certainly start sorting if I already know that it will all be recycled, but as I don't have the option, my opinion is not important because everything goes in one container where I throw everything else.”* (Nikola-PC1) Code: Country Sustainable/Unsustainable Practices

As already stated above, the state has a very important role when it comes to raising awareness among citizens, a few respondents declared that they were absolutely not interested in recycling because they think that even though they might take care of such things, in the end it would all end up in a to a large landfill or would not be recycled at all by companies dealing with waste in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Likewise, individuals in certain parts of the city do not have access to recycling bins at all, so they are unable to do so.

Category VI: (De)Motivational factors that affect the purchase of sustainable packaged beauty products

This category is used to determine the motivational or demotivational factors that can attract or distract consumers from the purchase of sustainable packaged beauty products. Also the influence of the price of such products is analyzed to understand consumers behavior.

*“As I have already stated, the unavailability can demotivate me from buying, our manufacturers who, at least as far as I have noticed, do not produce packaging that can be recycled, and of course I am demotivated by the lack of containers in which waste is sorted for recycling.”* (Nikola-PC1) Code: Factors that Demotivate the Purchase of Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products

*“What can demotivate me are primarily the people who sell it, in the context of their knowledge and dedication to the customer, because I am someone who observes the way and wants the seller to be dedicated to me as a potential or regular customer. What can also demotivate me is the company's policy in the context that today we have many companies that tell the story of sustainability, but there are cases where completely different information about it comes out to the public, which negatively affects the image of them.”* (Nikolina-PC2) Code: Factors that Demotivate the Purchase of Sustainable Packaged beauty Products

*“What can demotivate me is if the price is very high for such products, and also the brand whose products they are can demotivate me.”* (Alina-PC4) Code: Factors that Demotivate the Purchase of Sustainable Packaged beauty Products

*“I might be demotivated by the fact that it is written on some packaging that it has been recycled more than once. I once gave up on buying toilet paper that was recycled three times because I was afraid of what it was recycled from, and it should touch my skin. I could be demotivated by the type of product, because I would buy three times recycled toilet paper, but I would buy three times recycled external packaging of a washing gel. If the product is directly packaged in a sustainable way, i.e. if I use a serum that is packed in a cardboard that has already been recycled, I would think about whether I would buy it, because in my mind the recycled cardboard is of lower quality than the non-recycled one, and I would be afraid that the serum does not leak over time during standing.”* (Zorana-PC8) Code: Factors that Demotivate the Purchase of Sustainable Packaged beauty Products

*“Perhaps ignorance, through my studies I have analyzed the topic of "Greenwashing" which refers to false marketing campaigns that try to promote the sustainability of products that are not sustainable. This is something that can turn me off, ie not knowing if a product is sustainable as the company says it is and does that company actually help nature as much as it promotes. Maybe their selling point is that we help nature, and in my opinion, that is a difficult statement, in some aspects, and difficult to measure from the customers. The way the packaging is presented and how it looks also plays a big role. Likewise, the position in the store, for example if there is a sustainably packaged cosmetic product on some low drawers, I will not perceive it as a product that is good and important. The lifestyle of influencers who promote such a product can also discourage me from buying if I see that that an influencer prone to telling falsehoods about other products.”* (Alija-PC5) Code: Factors that Demotivate the Purchase of Sustainable Packaged beauty Products

The most repeated factors that could demotivate the purchase of sustainable packaged beauty products were bad company/brand reputation (especially if the greenwashing is present), certain packaging cues such as bad quality cardboard packaging, the unavailability of such products, rude sellers or influencers that are not adequate for promotion of such products. One interesting factor that could demotivate consumers is the product position in the store i.e. if sustainable packaged beauty products is placed on the lower drawer, consumer would not see it as something valuable and would skip the purchase of it.

*“As for the appearance of the packaging, it doesn't really matter to me. It is important to me that they are easy to open and that they can be used again, that is, if I use a product, I can return the package if I don't have space to put it somewhere else. As for the branding, of course it's nice to see. In this context, branding comes second to me, while the practicality of the packaging comes first. Brand reputation is a very important factor for me when I decide what to buy in the context of looking at what the brand is like, whether there is social responsibility, what the relations with the employees are like. what are the political views.”* (Nikolina-PC2) Code: Factors that Motivate the Purchase of Sustainable Packaged beauty Products

*“The most important factor for packaging is that the packaging is made of adequate materials that do not break easily. I don't like it when the product doesn't have the necessary*

*labels, such as certificates that everything is made of natural materials or at least the majority of it, or labels that say that the product has not been tested on animals.*” (Alina-PC4) Code: Factors that Motivate the Purchase of Sustainable Packaged beauty Products

*“I'm attracted to the fact that it's recycled, i.e. some label indicating that, I'm attracted if there aren't many boxes, i.e. the product doesn't come in multiple boxes. The material also attracts me, my favorite are glass and aluminum packaging.”* (Zorana-PC8) Code: Factors that Motivate the Purchase of Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products

*“I definitely think that the logo and reputation of the brand are the things that influence me in terms of loyalty, connection with the brand, and also a recommendation from a friend is important to me. The color and shape of the packaging certainly make me want to buy. The deodorant I use is totally different from other deodorants in terms of use, and therefore I am also interested in using such a product because it is different. If I notice a certain scent that is interesting to me, it will probably also attract me to try such a product.”* (Alija-PC5) Code: Factors that Motivate the Purchase of Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products

The factors that can motivate consumers to purchase sustainable packaged beauty products are good brand reputation, that the packaging is made from adequate materials, that it is functional also. Also certain packaging cues such as: eco labels, certificates, color, shape and scent can attract consumers to purchase such product.

Q14: What role does the price of sustainably packaged cosmetic products play in your purchase (Fontes, Moreira and Carlos, 2021)?

*“As for me, I was very skeptical at first. The deodorant I'm currently using was given to me for my birthday once and I was blown away by it. When I went to the store to buy it again, I was surprised by the price of the product, at first I thought it was inflation, but when I saw the prices of other deodorants, I was surprised. However, I will still say that the quality of this sustainable product for me is much higher than non-sustainable products and for that reason it is worth paying twice as much money for that product if it will last and have a better effect on my body.”* (Alija-PC5) Code: Influence that the Price of the Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products has on purchase

*“Let's say that the price should be neither lower nor higher, if the brand advertises quality and works to ensure that the packaging is sustainable, he would probably buy again even if it is more expensive if the product next to it is packed in plastic that will decompose for hundreds of years and even then it won't fall apart completely. Price does not play a role for me personally, because quality and sustainability would be more important to me than price.”* (Miran-PC6) Code: Influence that the Price of the Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products has on purchase

*“It has no role. If the product is what I want and belongs to the range of brands I'm interested in, the price doesn't matter to me, even if it's 50% more expensive, I'd pay more if the*

*packaging is sustainable.*” (Zorana-PC8) Code: Influence that the Price of the Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products has on purchase

*“Considering my age and the fact that I don't earn money, it plays a big role because sometimes I simply have to choose what is my priority to buy at the moment, and it might not be a sustainably packaged beauty product if its price is higher than I have money with myself.”* (Alina-PC4) Code: Influence that the Price of the Sustainable Packaged Beauty Products has on purchase

Regarding the influence of the price of sustainably packaged cosmetic products, the majority of respondents declared that it does not play such a role, but that what they are looking for is quality, and if a product packaged in this way provides them with that, they will choose it. They also stated that it is not right for such packaged products to be too cheap, taking into account the high cost of natural materials that are needed to make such products. Individuals stated that they would pay twice as much for such a product if it had a good effect on their skin, as well as on the environment. The younger generations are the ones for whom the price is somewhat of an important factor because they depend on their parents and may not always be able to afford what they want, which is somewhat normal for their age. Likewise, individuals have grasped the situation in the country, inflation, and household income, which in BiH are not at an enviable level, and probably for people who do not have such a large income, the price plays a big role when buying.

In order to obtain answers to the research questions of this work, an analysis was conducted on consumers to determine their attitudes about sustainably packaged beauty products.

RQ1: How familiar are consumers with sustainably packaged beauty products in Bosnia and Herzegovina?

What was originally important to investigate and establish was the familiarity of the participants (consumers) with sustainably packaged cosmetic products and in general with the concept of sustainability and all the practices that belong to it. What was mostly noticed during the analysis is that consumers are very familiar with what sustainably packaged cosmetic products are, and also a few participants declared that they use them daily as part of their beauty routine. They mostly described sustainably packaged cosmetic products as something that is made of natural materials, which can be recycled and which does not cause as much damage to nature as is the case with non-sustainable packaging of cosmetic products.

What is very interesting is that most of the participants stated that sustainable practices are not at a high level in the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina and that citizens as such are not at all that aware of sustainability and its benefits for nature and future generations. Citing a banal example such as not having enough recycling bins in the capital city of Sarajevo as the reason why citizens do not practice recycling as much in their daily lives, the participants of this research expressed the view that in the future the state must make an effort to make the



concept of sustainability at a much higher level than is currently the case. Despite the "negligence" of the state towards sustainability, some respondents really expressed different ways in which they try to improve the environment and, in some way, preserve harmony both with themselves and with nature.

RQ2: How do personal factors encourage customers to buy sustainably packaged beauty products?

Specifically, in this research, personal factors (lifestyle, age, gender and income) were investigated in order to give insight into how people of different lifestyles, genders, ages, and incomes react to the purchase of sustainably packaged cosmetic products.

Through the analysis, it was concluded that personal factors can really encourage consumers to buy sustainably packaged cosmetic products.

As for lifestyle, it is mainly people who live a sustainable lifestyle and who decide to buy sustainably packaged cosmetic products, while consumers who do not really live such a sustainable lifestyle or are only somewhere in the initial phase of sustainability are willing to buy such products, however many factors influence their lack of interest in such products, and some of the most prominent are the impossibility of recycling, the high prices of sustainable products, and the like.

As for gender, the female gender is characterized as the one who uses sustainably packaged beauty products much more and more often, but also as a person who can influence their partners in purchasing them. The male gender, on the other hand, is somewhat willing to use such products, but for them the functionality of the product is a priority over sustainability. What is unique for both genders is that quality is their priority when choosing sustainably packaged beauty products.

When it comes to age, members of Generation Z and Millennials were among the respondents. What is characteristic of the members of the Generation is that they are quite guided by the latest trends and that they have quite a large influence on what beauty products they use, but also through the analysis it was seen that they are very willing to use cosmetically packaged beauty products all while it is in line with their pocket money. As for the Millennials, most of them stated that with age they care much more about nature than it was the case when they were younger and that now the aspect of what they will leave behind for their heirs is also very important to them.

Regarding income, the interviewees pointed out that it plays a very important role, especially in the country where they live, and that people with lower incomes may not be able to afford sustainably packaged cosmetic products in some situations. Most agreed that buying sustainably packaged beauty products is not the same for those with high incomes who may not think as much about the price of such products and for those with lower incomes who have other life priorities. Likewise, some members of Generation Z declared that they would be happy to spend money on such products, but that everything depends on their pocket

money because most still depend on their parents. What is also the conclusion of the analysis is that consumers are willing to spend more money if a sustainably packaged cosmetic product offers quality.

RQ3: What are the factors discouraging consumers from buying sustainably packaged beauty products?

Through their responses, consumers mentioned several factors that could discourage them from buying sustainably packaged beauty products. The most prominent such factors are:

1. The impossibility of adequate recycling in the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina due to bad ecological practices
2. Poor quality and overpriced sustainable packaged beauty products
3. The bad reputation of the company that sells sustainably packaged beauty products, as well as the use of greenwashing in its business
4. Poor product results

RQ4: How do packaging cues affect customers to buy sustainably packaged beauty products?

Packaging as such is a very important aspect that is observed a lot by the majority of respondents. First of all, the quality of a sustainably packaged cosmetic product is important to everyone because it guarantees that the product is correct. As for packaging signs that can influence consumers to buy a sustainably packaged cosmetic product, these are:

1. Color and shape of the packaging,
2. Design
3. Certificates that confirm the validity of the product and that there was no animal testing done
4. Label indicating that the packaging is recycled
5. Glass and aluminum packaging are also what attract consumers and likewise, if the packaging is made of high-quality materials, it can attract them to buy it.

RQ5: How do price cues affect customers to buy sustainably packaged beauty products?

Price is a very important factor of every product, including sustainably packaged beauty products. As for the attitudes of the participants of this research, most of them stated that they are willing to pay for a high-quality sustainably packaged beauty product even though its price is higher than sustainable because the aspect of the nature that surrounds them is quite important to them and they are willing to do a big thing for this world with their small

steps. . Some participants stated that in the future, sustainably packaged cosmetic products should be affordable so that all citizens can afford them and thereby eliminate the practice of buying unsustainable packaging that causes great damage to nature. As for the price-quality ratio, most believe that price is not a reflection of quality, while individuals stated that the quality of a sustainably packaged cosmetic product is closely related to price and that a higher price still means a higher quality. What was also stated about the price of sustainably packaged cosmetic products is that it should not be excessively low, because making such packaging requires serious investments in both technology and raw materials, which are necessary for such packaging to be natural and high quality.

#### **4.4. Limitations and Future Research Recommendations**

First of all, it is important to note that although qualitative research is very useful for obtaining some in-depth answers through talking to people and if it has a lot of positive sides, there are also few limitations for this type of the research which will be elaborated in this part along with the future research recommendations.

One of the limitations is that it takes a lot of time and effort to adequately transcribe and analyze each participant's responses, especially when it is done manually, without the help of any programs that are usually used to analyze qualitative research responses.

Likewise, when talking about the sample size for this research, there were a total of 10 respondents, which can be said to be a sufficient number for qualitative research, however, in the future, other researchers could do quantitative research with a larger number of people. A larger number of responses would also lead to the results being more realistic and presented statistically in order to get a fluent insight into the attitudes of a larger part of the population towards sustainably packaged beauty products. Perhaps the combination of both quantitative and qualitative research would be even better for gaining more realistic results as well as the opinions from the participants.

Although the goal of this research was to some extent to gain insight into the attitudes of consumers about sustainably packaged beauty products in Bosnia and Herzegovina, further research could expand the picture and conduct research in countries outside of Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to see aspects of sustainability in the same as attitudes consumer.

This master's thesis was based on the combination of two theories: Consumer Behavior Theory and Cue Utilization Theory. Future researchers could use some other theories in their works in order to perhaps reach some new conclusions related to consumer attitudes about sustainably packaged beauty products.

#### **4.5. Managerial Implications**

This master's thesis could help in many ways in real life. Primarily by insight into the attitudes of consumers about sustainably packaged cosmetic products, the authorities as well

as organizations dealing with the introduction of sustainability in Bosnia and Herzegovina could understand the way of thinking of consumers and base their ecological decisions related to Bosnia and Herzegovina on that. .

What was definitely stated through the research as a weakness of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina is that there are not enough recycling bins available to the citizens, as well as that the state is not at all committed to raising the awareness of the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina about sustainability, recycling and the benefits that such a lifestyle can provide. to provide to the country they live in, but also to the world. The introduction of better sustainable practices as well as tools for the same, the introduction of lectures on recycling as well as perhaps some fines for people who do not behave properly towards nature could definitely be introduced in the future in the country of Bosnia and Herzegovina so that sustainability would be at a much higher level. Considering the dissatisfaction expressed by some participants regarding the unavailability of quality and good brands that sell sustainably packaged cosmetic products, the import of brands and companies that offer sustainably packaged high-quality cosmetic products could also increase. Some male participants also expressed their dissatisfaction because they believe that there are a lot more available sustainably packaged cosmetic options for women than for men, and that segment of meeting the needs of the male gender should also be the focus of companies in Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to they could use adequate products for their needs.

Also, considering that some men may still be uneducated about the benefits of cosmetic products for their face, marketing teams of companies should work a lot more on creating campaigns that equally promote the application of sustainably cosmetic skincare products by men and women as men would not feel less valuable and to see that they have a variety of sustainably packaged cosmetic options for them as well.

Through their answers, the participants (consumers) gave very useful suggestions for companies that currently sell sustainably packaged cosmetic products. One such proposal was for the large company DM to put a coupon for ecologically sustainable packaging in its application that would be valid for the entire month of April, given that April 22 is Earth Day, and in this way would motivate customers to buy such packaged products.

Brands should also work a lot on the factors that can demotivate customers from buying sustainably packaged cosmetic products. One of the factors that can turn away a customer is the unkindness of the staff that sells sustainably packaged cosmetic products, and therefore companies need to take a lot of care about team-building and the education of each individual workers so that their behavior is in line with what the company represents and so that they actually acquire skills that would attract customers to the product and not the opposite. Likewise, a bad brand reputation and the use of greenwashing can really leave a bad impact on consumers, and if trust in a brand is once distorted, it is very difficult to restore that trust among customers, and for this reason, companies should present themselves as they are, and should work on possible shortcomings as would provide the greatest possible satisfaction to their customers by incorporating new trends into their products and technologies.

The positioning of sustainably packaged cosmetic products in stores also plays a role in purchasing them, because consumers expect high-quality products on the top of the shelf, and if sustainably packaged cosmetic products are on the bottom shelves, consumers will perceive them as lower-quality products, and that is why such products should be on at the very top and impressive to the eye. Also, some of the remarks of individual respondents related to the functionality of sustainable packaging of cosmetic products, and companies could look at this aspect as well and perhaps improve research and development related to this in order to bring to the market a sustainable packaged beauty product that is of high quality and appreciated by the consumer.

What is seen and appreciated by customers is the design, shape, and label of the packaging, and taking this into account, companies should always strive to produce sustainably packaged cosmetic products that are innovative and that will attract customers with their appearance and packaging elements.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

Sustainability as a phenomenon is something that is very important to talk about so that all the people of the world are aware of its benefits and how world changes can be made by accepting such a phenomenon. While technologies around the world were developing and new ways of doing business as well as production were developing, unbalanced consumption of natural resources was also developing, which caused various climate changes and led to Global Warming (García and Sanz, 2018). Humans have in some way knowingly or unknowingly threatened nature and how people behaved many years ago, affects current lives while what people do today will affect other generations later (García and Sanz, 2018). Many sustainable solutions have emerged as a solution to this problem, and some of them are electric vehicles, and micro-mobility (Abduljabbar, Liyanage and Dia, 2021). What is particularly important for this master's thesis are solutions in the form of sustainable packaging of cosmetic products that were created with the aim of making packaging as natural as possible that does not harm the environment in the way unsustainable packaging does, and that is also packaging that is reusable and suitable for recycling. For everything related to people as consumers, it is also valid to investigate their attitudes regarding such topics and to understand their way of thinking because they are the main actors. In order to examine the attitudes of consumers on this topic, qualitative research was used in the form of semi-structured interviews in order to get an in-depth answer from the respondents. The theories on which this master thesis is based are: Consumer Behavior Theory and Cue Utilization Theory. As for the CBT is very important because it analyzed personal factors (lifestyle, age, gender and income) that have been proven to influence the purchase of sustainably packaged cosmetic products. Likewise, with the CUT, Packaging and Price cues that can affect the purchase of sustainably packaged cosmetic products are taken into account to determine which cues can attract or repel consumers from purchasing.

This research concludes that in Bosnia and Herzegovina, consumers are quite familiar with sustainably packaged beauty products, however, the authorities are somehow to blame for the fact that citizens' awareness of recycling and sustainability is not at the high level it should be. The lack of trash cans as well as recycling bins leads to the fact that citizens somehow lose the will to buy sustainably packaged beauty products because they subconsciously know that such products in that country will not be recycled in the right way, as is the practice in some better-developed countries. When taking into account the lifestyle that consumers live, it can certainly impact their acceptance and consumption of sustainable packaged beauty products because those who live or try to live sustainable lifestyles are much more influenced to try those products and it is some type of priority for them than it is for consumers who don't live sustainable lifestyle. When talking about gender differences, the conclusion is that it is mostly women who buy sustainably packaged beauty products, which is due to the greater availability of such products for them, which is due to their daily use, while for men it can be said that they are slowly starting to buy such packaging, however, the most important factor when shopping for them is the functionality of the product. What both sexes have in common is that they primarily look for quality in sustainably packaged cosmetic products and that they are ready to pay more for such products if they provide the benefits they promise. As for generational differences, Generation Z really understands the trend of sustainability and follows it as much as possible, while Millennials are much more interested in sustainably packaged cosmetic products now than they were when they were younger, because now they are already thinking about what they will leave behind. this world for his heirs. Income plays an important role when buying sustainably packaged cosmetic products, especially for Generation Z, where some members still depend on their parents and may not always be able to afford a sustainable alternative. Likewise, the aspect of the state in the country where the research was conducted is important to take into account because inflation is present and incomes are not as high as in the case of better-developed countries, and perhaps for individuals with low incomes, sustainability is not a priority because they are making ends meet. As for packaging cues that can attract the purchase of sustainably packaged cosmetic products, the most frequently viewed elements are the packaging's functionality, shape, appearance, design, as well as labels that confirm the correctness and recyclability of the product and the like. On the other hand, price cues play an important role, but what was common to almost all respondents is that the price is not that important and that it is higher than an unsustainable option if the quality of the product is at a high level.

What can be put as a definitive conclusion of this research is that in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the future, major changes and improvements in sustainability are needed primarily at the state level, and then also on the civic acceptance of sustainable practices. Although the acceptance of such practices already exists, it is believed that for an even more efficient future, it should be at a much higher level. Likewise, the availability of companies that offer sustainably packaged beauty products should be even greater in the future and much more promoted than is currently the case for both men and women.

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