ANTECEDENTS OF GREEN REPURCHASE INTENTION IN THE VIETNAMESE COSMETICS INDUSTRY: THE ROLE OF GREEN AUTHENTICITY PERCEPTION

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Abstract: ***This study analyzes the impact of five factors on Vietnamese consumers' green repurchase intention in the cosmetics industry within the context of the increasingly prevalent greenwashing phenomenon, including: green authenticity perception, green trust, environmental concern, health consciousness, and perceived green value. Data were collected from 180 Vietnamese consumers with experience in using green cosmetics products through an online survey and analyzed using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method with SmartPLS 4.0 software. The results show that all five factors have significant positive effects on green repurchase intention, with green trust having the strongest impact (β = 0.352), followed by perceived green value (β = 0.260), green authenticity perception (β = 0.250), health consciousness (β = 0.216), and environmental concern (β = 0.141). The model explains 69.5% of the variance in green repurchase intention. The study provides important implications for green cosmetics businesses in developing authentic and sustainable marketing strategies in the Vietnamese market.***

• Keywords: *greenwashing, green trust, repurchase intention, green cosmetics, PLS-SEM.*

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1. Introduction

In recent years, the Vietnamese cosmetics industry has witnessed strong growth and has become one of the most dynamic markets in Southeast Asia. According to IMARC Group (2025), the size of the Vietnamese cosmetics market reached approximately USD 1.8 billion in 2025 and is projected to reach USD 2.9 billion by 2034, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.38% during the period 2026-2034. Along with economic development and increasing disposable income, Vietnamese consumers are increasingly interested in high-quality personal care products, especially those with natural origins and environmental friendliness. A 2024 survey by the Vietnam Ministry of Industry and Trade showed that more than 30% of Vietnamese consumers prioritize beauty products with natural ingredients, reflecting the growing trend of green consumption in society.

However, alongside the development of the green cosmetics market is the increasingly serious problem of greenwashing. Greenwashing is defined as corporate behavior involving false or exaggerated claims about the environmental attributes of products to create positive impressions on consumers (Chen & Chang, 2013). In the cosmetics industry, this phenomenon is particularly prevalent with vague claims such as "natural," "organic," and "eco-friendly" without clear evidence. Sun and Shi (2022) indicate that greenwashing perception has a significant negative impact on consumers' green purchase intention while also eroding their trust in businesses. As a result, consumers are becoming increasingly skeptical of green claims, even from brands genuinely committed to environmental protection, hindering the sustainable development of the entire industry.

Although there has been considerable research on green consumer behavior, several important research gaps remain to be addressed. First, most existing studies focus on initial purchase intention, while insufficient attention has been paid to repurchase intention - a key factor determining the long-term success of businesses (Chen & Chang, 2012). Second, the specific role of health consciousness in the context of

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green cosmetics consumption - where products come into direct contact with the body - has not been fully explored (Michaelidou & Hassan, 2008). Third, empirical studies on the impact of greenwashing in the cosmetics industry in the Vietnamese market remain limited.

Based on these research gaps, this study aims to analyze the impact of five factors including green authenticity perception, green trust, environmental concern, health consciousness, and perceived green value on the green repurchase intention of Vietnamese consumers. The Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method is employed to test the research hypotheses.

Theoretically, the study contributes to enriching the understanding of factors affecting green repurchase intention in the context of widespread greenwashing. Practically, the research findings provide valuable managerial implications for cosmetics businesses in developing authentic and sustainable green marketing strategies, while also supporting policymakers in protecting consumer rights in Vietnam.

2. Literature review and hypotheses development

2.1. Theoretical Foundation

2.1.1. Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) developed by Ajzen (1991) is one of the most influential and widely applied theoretical frameworks for explaining and predicting consumer intentions and behaviors across various domains. TPB postulates that an individual's behavioral intention - the immediate antecedent of actual behavior - is jointly determined by three core components: (1) attitude toward the behavior, which reflects the individual's positive or negative evaluation of performing the behavior; (2) subjective norms, which represent the perceived social pressure from significant others to perform or not perform the behavior; and (3) perceived behavioral control, which refers to the individual's perception of the ease or difficulty of performing the behavior based on available resources and opportunities. The stronger these three components, the stronger the individual's intention to engage in the behavior, and consequently, the higher the likelihood of actual behavioral performance.

In the field of green consumption, TPB has demonstrated robust explanatory power and has been widely employed to investigate consumer decision-making regarding environmentally friendly products. However, scholars have noted that the original TPB framework, while comprehensive, may not fully capture the complexity of green consumption behavior, which is often driven by factors beyond the three core components. As a result, TPB has been extended (Extended TPB) by incorporating additional context-specific variables to enhance its predictive capability. These extended variables include environmental concern, green trust, perceived green value, health consciousness, and ethical self-identity, all of which have been empirically validated as significant predictors of green purchase intention and behavior (Michaelidou & Hassan, 2008; Chen & Chang, 2012).

In the context of this study, TPB provides a solid theoretical foundation for examining the antecedents of green repurchase intention in the Vietnamese cosmetics industry. The proposed independent variables in the research model reflect the extended TPB perspective: green trust, perceived green value, and green authenticity perception can be considered as cognitive evaluations shaping consumer attitudes toward green cosmetics products; environmental concern represents the personal normative beliefs that motivate sustainable consumption; and health consciousness reflects the individual motivation related to perceived benefits and self-control over health-related outcomes. By integrating these variables into a unified framework, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors driving repurchase intention for green cosmetics in an emerging market context.

2.1.2. Signaling Theory

Signaling Theory, originally developed by Spence (1973) in the context of labor markets, has become a fundamental theoretical framework for understanding information transmission in markets characterized by information asymmetry

between two parties. The core premise of the theory is that when one party (the sender) possesses more information than the other party (the receiver), the sender can transmit credible "signals" to convey relevant information about unobservable qualities, thereby reducing information asymmetry and facilitating informed decision-making. For signals to be effective, they must be costly to imitate and must accurately reflect the underlying qualities they represent; otherwise, they lose their credibility and informational value.

In the context of green marketing and sustainable consumption, Signaling Theory provides a powerful lens for analyzing the dynamics between companies and consumers. Companies, as senders, communicate the environmental friendliness of their products through various signals such as eco-labels, green certifications (e.g., COSMOS Organic, Ecocert), sustainable packaging, environmental claims on product packaging, and green marketing campaigns. Consumers, as receivers, interpret these signals to evaluate the genuine environmental attributes of products before making purchasing decisions. When signals are perceived as authentic, credible, and consistent with actual corporate practices, consumer trust and purchase intention are strengthened. Conversely, when consumers detect inconsistencies or perceive signals as misleading - a phenomenon commonly known as greenwashing - their trust in the brand erodes, leading to negative behavioral outcomes such as reduced purchase intention, negative word-of-mouth, and brand switching (Chen & Chang, 2013).

Within the framework of this study, Signaling Theory is particularly relevant for explaining the role of green authenticity perception and green trust in shaping green repurchase intention. The theory helps elucidate why authentic green signals - which are difficult to fabricate and require genuine corporate investment in sustainability - serve as effective mechanisms for building consumer confidence and fostering long-term repurchase behavior. In the Vietnamese cosmetics industry, where greenwashing claims have become increasingly common, the ability of consumers to distinguish authentic green signals from deceptive ones plays a critical role in determining their willingness to continue purchasing green cosmetics products. Therefore, Signaling Theory complements the Theory of Planned Behavior by providing a deeper understanding of the cognitive evaluation processes through which consumers assess the credibility of green claims and form their behavioral intentions.

2.2. Research Concepts and Hypotheses Development

2.2.1. Green Authenticity Perception and Green Repurchase Intention

Green Authenticity Perception reflects the extent to which consumers perceive that a company's environmental claims are authentic, transparent, and well-founded. This concept is the opposite of greenwashing perception - the phenomenon in which companies make false or exaggerated environmental claims (Sun & Shi, 2022). When consumers perceive that a company's green claims are authentic, they will have a higher intention to continue purchasing the product. Conversely, a lack of authenticity will reduce repurchase intention as consumers feel deceived (Chen & Chang, 2013). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Green authenticity perception has a positive impact on green repurchase intention of cosmetics products.

2.2.2. Green Trust and Green Repurchase Intention

Green Trust is defined as a willingness to depend on a product, service, or brand based on the belief or expectation regarding its credibility, benevolence, and ability to fulfill environmental commitments (Chen, 2010). Trust is considered a fundamental factor in maintaining long-term relationships between consumers and businesses. Chen and Chang (2012) demonstrated that green trust has a significant positive effect on green purchase intention. In the cosmetics industry - where consumers are particularly concerned about product quality and safety - trust plays an even more important role. Therefore:

H2: Green trust has a positive impact on green repurchase intention of cosmetics products.

2.2.3. Environmental Concern and Green Repurchase Intention

Environmental Concern reflects the level of awareness and concern an individual has toward environmental issues, as well as their willingness to contribute to solving these problems through consumption behavior. Sun and Shi (2022) indicate that consumers with a high sense of environmental responsibility tend to support environmentally friendly products. In the context of the cosmetics industry, consumers with high environmental concern will prioritize products with recyclable packaging, natural ingredients, and sustainable production processes. Therefore:

H3: Environmental concern has a positive impact on green repurchase intention of cosmetics products.

2.2.4. Health Consciousness and Green Repurchase Intention

Health Consciousness reflects the extent to which an individual is concerned about and actively protects their own health (Michaelidou & Hassan, 2008). This is a particularly important factor in the cosmetics industry because these products come into direct contact with the skin and may contain chemicals that pose potential health risks. Consumers with high health consciousness often prioritize green, organic cosmetics products that do not contain parabens, sulfates, and other harmful chemical ingredients. Michaelidou and Hassan (2008) confirmed the role of health consciousness in shaping attitudes and intentions toward organic product consumption. Therefore:

H4: Health consciousness has a positive impact on green repurchase intention of cosmetics products.

2.2.5. Perceived Green Value and Green Repurchase Intention

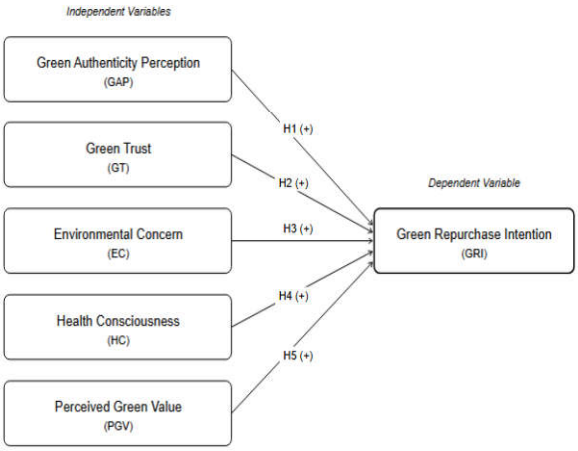
Perceived Green Value is defined as the consumer's overall assessment of the benefits versus costs of using green products based on environmental expectations and sustainability needs (Chen & Chang, 2012). When consumers perceive high value from green products - including functional, emotional, and social values - they tend to continue purchasing the product in the future. Chen and Chang (2012) demonstrated that perceived green value has a strong positive impact on green purchase intention. Therefore:

H5: Perceived green value has a positive impact on green repurchase intention of cosmetics products.

2.3. Proposed Research Model

Based on the literature review and the developed hypotheses, the proposed research model includes five independent variables that directly affect the dependent variable - green repurchase intention of cosmetics products, including: (1) green authenticity perception, (2) green trust, (3) environmental concern, (4) health consciousness, and (5) perceived green value (See Figure 1).

Figure 1. Proposed Research Model



3. Research methodology

This study employs a quantitative method through a questionnaire survey to test the research model and hypotheses. The survey targets Vietnamese consumers aged 18 and above who have purchased and used green cosmetics products, including skincare, makeup, and personal care products with natural origins or marketed as environmentally friendly. Convenience sampling combined with snowball sampling was applied to efficiently reach appropriate respondents under resource constraints. The questionnaire was designed in two main parts: the first part contains screening questions and demographic information (gender, age, occupation, income, frequency of purchasing green cosmetics); the second part includes 24 observed variables measuring six constructs in the model, adapted

from validated scales in previous studies by Chen and Chang (2012), Michaelidou and Hassan (2008), and Sun and Shi (2022). The observed variables were measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree; 5 = Strongly agree). Before the official survey, the questionnaire was back-translated by two language experts and pilot-tested with 30 consumers to ensure clarity and reliability. The official survey was conducted online through Google Forms and distributed via popular social media platforms in Vietnam. After excluding invalid responses, the study obtained 180 valid questionnaires, meeting the minimum sample size requirement of the PLS-SEM method according to the 10-times rule of Hair et al. (2019). Data were processed and analyzed using SmartPLS 4.0 software through two steps: evaluation of the measurement model (reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity) and evaluation of the structural model (hypothesis testing, path coefficients, R^2).

4. Research results and discussion

4.1. Research Results

4.1.1. Sample Characteristics

The study obtained 180 valid questionnaires from Vietnamese consumers with experience using green cosmetics products. Regarding gender, females accounted for the majority (73.3%), while males accounted for 26.7%. By age, the 26-35 age group accounted for the largest proportion (43.3%), followed by 18-25 years old (31.1%), 36-45 years old (17.8%), and over 45 years old (7.8%). In terms of education, most respondents had a college/university degree (76.7%), followed by postgraduate (16.6%) and high school (6.7%). Regarding income, the 10-20 million VND/month group accounted for the highest proportion (42.2%), followed by 20-30 million VND/month (24.5%), under 10 million VND/month (23.3%), and over 30 million VND/month (10.0%). Regarding the frequency of purchasing green cosmetics, the majority of respondents purchased every 2-3 months (46.7%) or monthly (32.2%), demonstrating the relevance of the sample to the research topic.

4.1.2. Measurement Model Assessment

Reliability and convergent validity: The reliability and convergent validity of the measurement scales are presented in Table 1. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of the scales range from 0.806 to 0.878 (all greater than 0.7), composite reliability (CR - rho_c) ranges from 0.873 to 0.916 (all greater than 0.7), and the average variance extracted (AVE) ranges from 0.633 to 0.732 (all greater than 0.5). All indicators exceed the required thresholds according to Hair et al. (2019), confirming that the measurement model achieves good reliability and convergent validity.

Table 1. Reliability and Convergent Validity of the Scales

Construct	Cronbach's α	rho_a	CR (rho_c)	AVE
EC	0.869	0.870	0.911	0.718
GAP	0.823	0.829	0.883	0.654
GRI	0.836	0.842	0.891	0.672
GT	0.865	0.874	0.908	0.713
HC	0.806	0.810	0.873	0.633
PGV	0.878	0.882	0.916	0.732

Discriminant validity: Discriminant validity was assessed through two criteria: Fornell-Larcker and HTMT. According to the Fornell-Larcker criterion, the square root of AVE of each construct (on the diagonal) was greater than the correlations with other constructs (the square roots of AVE ranged from 0.796 to 0.856, while the highest correlation between constructs was 0.614 between GT and GRI). Simultaneously, the HTMT test results showed that all coefficients were less than the 0.85 threshold, with the highest value being 0.716 (between GT and GRI), meeting the standards of Henseler et al. (2015). Thus, the measurement scales in the study ensure good discriminant validity.

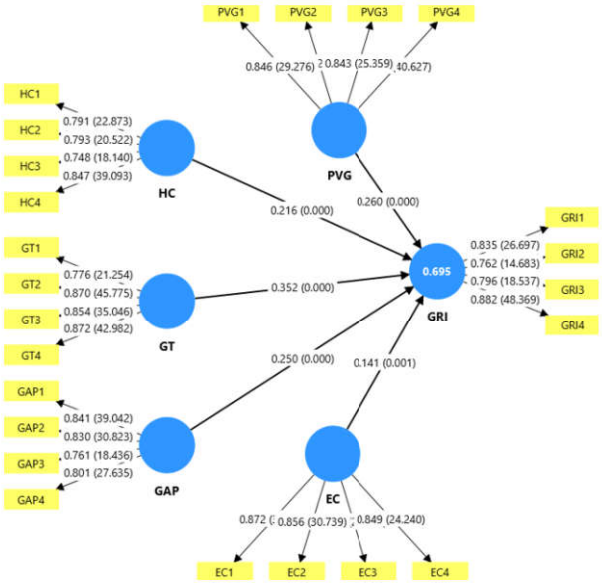
4.1.3. Structural Model Assessment

Multicollinearity test: Before evaluating the structural model, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was checked. All VIF values of the independent variables were less than 3.3 (the threshold proposed by Hair et al., 2019), confirming no serious multicollinearity in the model.

Hypothesis testing results: The bootstrapping analysis results with 5,000 resamples are illustrated in Figure 2. All five hypotheses are accepted with high statistical significance ($p < 0.01$). Specifically, green trust (GT) has the strongest impact on green repurchase intention

(β = 0.352; t = 6.509; p < 0.001), followed by perceived green value (PGV; β = 0.260; t = 5.259; p < 0.001), green authenticity perception (GAP; β = 0.250; t = 5.510; p < 0.001), health consciousness (HC; β = 0.216; t = 5.546; p < 0.001), and finally environmental concern (EC; β = 0.141; t = 3.202; p = 0.001). Therefore, all five hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H4, and H5 are supported.

Figure 2. Bootstrap Results of the Structural Model



Explanatory power of the model: The coefficient of determination R^2 of the dependent variable - green repurchase intention (GRI) - reached 0.695 (Adjusted R^2 = 0.687), indicating that the five independent variables in the model explain 69.5% of the variance in green repurchase intention of cosmetics products - a high level of explanation according to Hair et al. (2019). Regarding effect size (f^2), green trust (GT) had the largest effect (f^2 = 0.326 - medium-strong level), followed by perceived green value (PGV; f^2 = 0.172 - medium), green authenticity perception (GAP; f^2 = 0.149 - medium), health consciousness (HC; f^2 = 0.123 - small to medium), and environmental concern (EC; f^2 = 0.043 - small).

The order of impact of the factors on green repurchase intention of cosmetics products is as follows: GT (β = 0.352) > PGV (β = 0.260) > GAP (β = 0.250) > HC (β = 0.216) > EC (β = 0.141).

4.2. Discussion

The research results confirm all five proposed hypotheses while also providing noteworthy findings for both theory and practice in the context of the Vietnamese green cosmetics industry.

First, green trust (GT) was identified as the factor with the strongest impact on green repurchase intention of cosmetics products (β = 0.352; f^2 = 0.326). This result is consistent with previous studies by Chen and Chang (2012) and Sun and Shi (2022), affirming the central role of trust in maintaining long-term relationships between consumers and brands. In the context of the Vietnamese cosmetics industry, which is facing many issues with counterfeit goods, low-quality products, and unsubstantiated environmental claims, trust becomes the most important intangible asset that businesses need to build and protect. Once consumers have established trust in a green cosmetics brand, they tend to maintain repeat purchasing behavior despite alternative options on the market.

Second, perceived green value (PGV; β = 0.260) and green authenticity perception (GAP; β = 0.250) have nearly equivalent impacts on repurchase intention. This indicates that Vietnamese consumers are concerned not only with the actual value received from products but also greatly emphasize the authenticity of corporate environmental claims. This finding reinforces the importance of greenwashing research in the current context, while also suggesting that businesses need to communicate honestly and transparently about the green attributes of their products rather than focusing solely on creating perceived value through flashy but unsubstantiated marketing campaigns.

Third, health consciousness (HC; β = 0.216) has a significant impact on green repurchase intention. This result reflects the specific characteristics of the cosmetics industry - products come into direct contact with the skin and affect users' health. Consumers with high health consciousness tend to choose green cosmetics products to avoid harmful chemicals such as parabens and sulfates, while also enjoying the benefits of natural ingredients. This finding is consistent with the research of Michaelidou and

Hassan (2008) on the role of health consciousness in organic and sustainable consumer behavior.

Fourth, environmental concern (EC) has the weakest impact in the model ($\beta = 0.141$; $f^2 = 0.043$). Although still statistically significant, this modest impact reflects the "green attitude-behavior gap" phenomenon widely discussed in previous research. Specifically, Vietnamese consumers express environmental concern at the awareness level, but when making cosmetics purchasing decisions, personal factors such as trust, perceived value, and health benefits play a more important role than environmental motivations. This is an interesting finding that poses a challenge for businesses and policymakers in converting consumers' environmental awareness into actual sustainable consumption behavior.

Finally, the R^2 coefficient of 0.695 shows that the research model has strong explanatory power for green repurchase intention of cosmetics products in the Vietnamese market, confirming the suitability of the theoretical framework and measurement scales applied in this study.

5. Conclusion and managerial implications

5.1. Conclusion

This study was conducted to analyze the impact of five factors on green repurchase intention of cosmetics products among Vietnamese consumers, including: green authenticity perception, green trust, environmental concern, health consciousness, and perceived green value. Through a survey of 180 consumers with experience using green cosmetics products and data analysis using the PLS-SEM method, the research results confirmed all five proposed hypotheses with high statistical significance ($p < 0.01$).

Specifically, green trust was identified as the factor with the strongest impact on green repurchase intention ($\beta = 0.352$), followed by perceived green value ($\beta = 0.260$), green authenticity perception ($\beta = 0.250$), health consciousness ($\beta = 0.216$), and finally environmental concern ($\beta = 0.141$). The research model explains 69.5% of the variance in green repurchase intention ($R^2 = 0.695$), demonstrating that the proposed theoretical framework has strong explanatory power for repurchase behavior in the context of the Vietnamese green cosmetics industry.

Theoretically, the study contributes to enriching the literature on green consumer behavior, especially in the context of increasingly prevalent greenwashing. The introduction of the concept of "green authenticity perception" into the model as an independent variable with a positive framing approach instead of measuring greenwashing in the traditional negative direction has brought a new perspective to research in this field. At the same time, the study also confirms the suitability of the classical scales of Chen and Chang (2012), Michaelidou and Hassan (2008), and Sun and Shi (2022) in the context of emerging markets like Vietnam.

5.2. Managerial Implications

Based on the research findings, several managerial implications are proposed for businesses operating in the green cosmetics industry in Vietnam as follows:

First, prioritize building and strengthening green trust. As the factor with the strongest impact, green trust should be considered a top priority in businesses' marketing strategies. Green cosmetics businesses need to fully implement their announced environmental commitments, publicly disclose information about raw material sources, production processes, and green certifications from reputable organizations. Maintaining consistency between words and actions over time will help build sustainable trust from consumers, thereby driving repeat purchasing behavior.

Second, enhance authenticity and transparency in green communications. The results show that Vietnamese consumers are particularly sensitive to the authenticity of environmental claims. Therefore, businesses should avoid vague, exaggerated, or unsubstantiated claims about the environmental friendliness of their products. Instead, communication messages should be specific with clear evidence (e.g., proportion of natural ingredients, organic certification, level of carbon reduction in production processes). Investing in reputable international certifications such as COSMOS Organic, Ecocert, or Vegan

Society will enhance the authenticity of green claims.

Third, enhance perceived green value through product quality and customer experience. To increase perceived value, businesses need to ensure that green products are not only environmentally friendly but also have superior quality in terms of effectiveness. Investing in research and development (R&D) to improve product formulas, combining natural ingredients with modern technology, will help create products that are both safe and effective. In addition, emotional and social values (e.g., the feeling of contributing to environmental protection) should also be emphasized in communication strategies.

Fourth, leverage the health factor in product positioning. Health consciousness is an important driver motivating consumers to choose green cosmetics. Businesses should position green products not only as "environmentally friendly" but also as "safe for health," emphasizing the absence of harmful ingredients such as parabens, sulfates, and phthalates. Providing complete information about the health benefits of natural ingredients on packaging and communication channels will increase the appeal of products to health-conscious consumer groups.

Fifth, bridge the gap between environmental awareness and consumption behavior. Although environmental concern has the weakest impact, it remains an important factor that needs to be leveraged. Businesses can bridge this attitude-behavior gap through consumer education programs, CSR campaigns with specific impacts (e.g., planting trees for each product sold, packaging recycling programs). At the same time, policymakers need to consider issuing stricter regulations on controlling green claims on cosmetics products, similar to the European Union's Green Claims Directive, to protect consumer rights and promote the sustainable development of the green cosmetics market.

5.3. Limitations and Future Research Directions

Despite achieving meaningful results, this study still has some limitations. First, the sample size of 180 questionnaires, although meeting the requirements of the PLS-SEM method, is relatively modest and uses convenience sampling, so the generalizability of the results to all Vietnamese consumers may be limited. Second, the study only focuses on five factors directly affecting repurchase intention without considering potentially meaningful mediating or moderating variables such as green satisfaction, green brand image, or demographic characteristics. Third, the study uses cross-sectional data at a single point in time, so it cannot reflect changes in consumer behavior over time.

Future research can be expanded in the following directions: (1) Increase sample size and apply stratified sampling methods to improve representativeness; (2) Add mediating and moderating variables to explore more complex interaction mechanisms between factors; (3) Conduct longitudinal studies to track changes in consumption intention and behavior over time; (4) Compare across different product groups in the cosmetics industry (skincare, makeup, haircare) or across different market segments; and (5) Expand the research to other countries in Southeast Asia to provide a cross-cultural comparative perspective.

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