Frontiers in Business, Economics and Management
ISSN: 2766-824X | Vol. 23, No. 1, 2026

Entering the Indonesian Clean Beauty Market: A Case Study of Grown Alchemist

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Abstract: The rapid expansion of the global clean beauty industry has created significant opportunities for international skincare brands seeking to enter emerging markets. Indonesia, with its large population and growing demand for sustainable and ethically produced personal care products, represents a particularly attractive destination for market entry. Despite the increasing importance of the Indonesian skincare market, limited academic research has examined how clean beauty brands can effectively position themselves within this rapidly developing environment. This research focuses on how sustainable skincare brands enter the market in Indonesia, specifically through an analysis of the Australian brand Grown Alchemist. The research, based on secondary market data from various industry sources like Euromonitor Statista Nielsen and other reports, uses a qualitative case study methodology to analyze consumer behavior, market trends and competition in the Indonesian skincare industry. The research suggests that Indonesian buyers, especially those young urban consumers of generation Z and millennials, are highly motivated for green beauty products. Nevertheless, buying behavior is still very much dominated by such things as price awareness, seeking of halal label, and advice through social networks. Results point to celebrity campaigns on social media, tie-ups with established local cosmetics stores, and appropriate product marketing as major factors paving the way for success in the market. This research adds to the body of work in international marketing and sustainable consumption by unveiling ways in which clean beauty brands may adjust their tactics when entering emerging markets. The results also provide actionable insights for worldwide skincare companies aiming at growing their footprint in Southeast Asia.

Keywords: Clean beauty; market entry strategy; Indonesia skincare market; sustainable consumption; emerging markets.

1. Introduction

The global beauty and personal care industry has undergone a significant transformation over the past decade, driven by increasing consumer awareness of sustainability and ethical consumption. Consumers are becoming more concerned about product ingredients, environmental impact, and corporate social responsibility, which has contributed to the rapid emergence of the "clean beauty" movement. Clean beauty products typically emphasize natural ingredients, environmentally friendly packaging, and transparent production processes. As a result, these products have attracted a growing segment of environmentally conscious consumers who seek safer, healthier, and more sustainable alternatives within the cosmetics market.

Emerging markets have become increasingly important for the global expansion of clean beauty brands. Among these markets, Indonesia represents a particularly promising destination due to its large population of over 270 million people and a rapidly expanding middle class [1]. The country's skincare market has experienced steady growth in recent years, supported by rising disposable income, urbanization, and increasing consumer awareness of natural and sustainable products [2]. As shown in Figure 1, the Indonesian skincare market has demonstrated consistent expansion between 2021 and 2025. Recent market outlooks also identify beauty and personal care as a strong-growth consumer category in Indonesia, supported by digital retail expansion and rising consumer sophistication [3, 4].



Source: Statista (2024), World Bank (2023)

Figure 1. Indonesia Skincare Market Growth Trend (2021–2025)

Urban consumers, particularly millennials and Generation Z, are becoming more selective in their skincare choices and are increasingly interested in brands that reflect their ethical and environmental values. These consumer groups tend to be highly active on digital platforms and are strongly influenced by online product reviews, social media discussions, and influencer recommendations. As a result, Indonesia has emerged as an attractive market for international skincare brands seeking to expand their presence in Southeast Asia.

Despite the growing importance of sustainable skincare markets in Southeast Asia, limited academic research has examined how international clean beauty brands can successfully enter emerging markets such as Indonesia. Existing studies have primarily focused on consumer behavior toward green products, sustainable consumption, or the influence of social media marketing within the beauty industry. While these studies provide valuable insights into consumer attitudes and digital marketing strategies, relatively little attention has been paid to the broader strategic challenges associated with international market entry for clean beauty brands.

There is a lack of research examining how global skincare companies adapt their branding, pricing, distribution, and communication strategies when entering emerging markets characterized by different cultural, economic, and regulatory environments. Understanding these strategic considerations is essential for explaining how sustainable skincare brands can successfully establish themselves in rapidly developing markets such as Indonesia.

To address this research gap, the present study examines the market entry strategies of clean beauty brands in Indonesia through a case study of Grown Alchemist, an Australian premium skincare brand known for its science-based formulations and sustainability-oriented brand positioning. By focusing on a real-world brand entering an emerging market, this study aims to provide a deeper understanding of how international skincare companies adapt their strategies to local consumer preferences and market conditions.

Specifically, this research seeks to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: What factors influence Indonesian consumers' adoption of sustainable skincare brands?

RQ2: How can international clean beauty brands effectively position themselves within the Indonesian skincare market?

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. Section 2 reviews the relevant literature on sustainable consumption, the clean beauty industry, consumer behaviour in the skincare sector, and international market entry strategies. Section 3 describes the research methodology adopted in this study. Section 4 presents the key findings derived from the case analysis. Section 5 discusses the theoretical and managerial implications of the findings. Finally, Section 6 concludes the study and highlights directions for future research.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Sustainable Consumption and Clean Beauty

Sustainable consumption has become an increasingly important topic in marketing and consumer behaviour research. In recent years, consumers have become more aware of environmental and ethical issues associated with product consumption, particularly in industries such as cosmetics and personal care [5]. This growing awareness has contributed to the emergence of the clean beauty movement, which emphasizes the use of natural ingredients, cruelty-free production processes, and environmentally friendly packaging.

Clean beauty brands aim to provide products that are perceived as safer for both consumers and the environment. As a result, these brands have attracted increasing attention from consumers who are concerned about product safety, ingredient transparency, and environmental sustainability.

Previous studies have shown that environmental awareness and health-related concerns significantly influence consumers' willingness to purchase green skincare products [6]. Consumers who are more aware of environmental issues tend to prefer products that are perceived as environmentally responsible and safe for personal use. In the cosmetics industry, transparency in ingredient sourcing and product formulation also plays a critical role in building consumer trust in sustainable beauty products.

Furthermore, consumers increasingly expect brands to disclose information about product ingredients, production processes, and environmental impact. Such transparency can strengthen brand credibility and encourage consumers to adopt environmentally friendly cosmetic products.

Previous studies have also emphasized the important role of environmental awareness in shaping green purchasing behavior. Consumers who hold strong environmental values are more likely to support sustainable brands and environmentally responsible companies. These consumers tend to evaluate products not only based on price or functionality but also on the environmental and ethical practices of the companies producing them.

In addition to environmental values, perceived product effectiveness and brand credibility are also critical factors influencing the adoption of green cosmetic products. If consumers believe that environmentally friendly products can provide comparable or superior performance to conventional cosmetics, they are more likely to adopt sustainable alternatives.

2.2. Development of the Clean Beauty Industry

The global cosmetics industry has undergone significant transformation in recent years with the emergence of the clean beauty movement. Clean beauty generally refers to cosmetic products formulated without potentially harmful ingredients and produced through environmentally responsible and ethically conscious processes. This concept has gained increasing attention among consumers who are concerned about product safety, environmental sustainability, and corporate transparency.

As consumer awareness continues to grow, clean beauty has evolved from a niche market segment into an important trend within the global beauty industry. Many skincare brands now emphasize natural ingredients, sustainable sourcing practices, and environmentally friendly packaging in order to meet the changing expectations of modern consumers.

The clean beauty market has experienced rapid growth in recent years. According to industry reports, global demand for natural and sustainable skincare products has expanded significantly, driven by increasing consumer awareness of environmental issues, health concerns, and ethical consumption. As consumers become more informed about the

potential risks associated with certain cosmetic ingredients, they are increasingly motivated to seek safer and more sustainable alternatives, including products based on bio-based and lower-impact ingredients [7, 8].

Consequently, consumers are more likely to examine product ingredients, manufacturing processes, and brand values when making purchasing decisions. This shift in consumer behaviour has encouraged many skincare companies to reformulate their products and adopt more transparent production practices.

In addition to environmental concerns, the clean beauty movement is also influenced by broader social trends such as ethical consumerism and corporate social responsibility. Consumers increasingly expect companies to operate in a transparent and responsible manner, particularly in industries that involve personal health and well-being, such as cosmetics and skincare.

Brands that demonstrate transparency in ingredient sourcing and production practices are more likely to build trust among consumers. As a result, many skincare companies have adopted sustainability-oriented strategies, including eco-friendly packaging, cruelty-free testing, and the use of natural or plant-based ingredients. These practices allow brands to strengthen their environmental credibility while responding to changing consumer expectations.

The rapid expansion of the clean beauty sector has created significant opportunities for international brands to enter emerging markets where consumer awareness of sustainability is gradually increasing. As consumers in developing economies become more exposed to global beauty trends, demand for environmentally friendly and ethically produced skincare products is also growing.

Southeast Asia, particularly Indonesia, has emerged as an important growth region for global skincare brands. The country's large and youthful population, combined with its rapidly expanding middle class and highly active digital economy, has created favourable conditions for the expansion of international beauty companies.

2.3. Consumer Behaviour in the Skincare Industry

The skincare industry is strongly influenced by social trends, digital media, and peer recommendations. In recent years, social media platforms have become increasingly important sources of information for consumers when evaluating beauty and skincare products. Previous studies have shown that social media platforms and beauty influencers significantly shape consumer perceptions, brand attitudes, and purchasing intentions [9-11].

In emerging markets, influencer marketing has become an important communication strategy for skincare brands seeking to establish credibility among younger consumers. This is especially relevant in Indonesia, where social media usage among young people is particularly high and strongly shapes online information exposure [12]. Influencers often provide product reviews, tutorials, and personal experiences, which can reduce uncertainty and help consumers make more informed purchasing decisions.

Furthermore, younger consumer groups, particularly millennials and Generation Z, demonstrate stronger interest in environmentally responsible brands. These consumers are generally more aware of sustainability issues and tend to support companies that align with their personal values and social identities [13].

Millennial and Generation Z consumers are also more likely to evaluate brands based on ethical considerations, such as environmental responsibility, transparency, and corporate social practices. As a result, brands that communicate clear sustainability values and demonstrate responsible business practices are more likely to attract these consumer groups.

Moreover, digital platforms have significantly transformed consumer decision-making processes in the beauty industry. Online reviews, product demonstrations, and social media discussions provide consumers with access to extensive information before making purchase decisions. These digital sources allow consumers to compare products, evaluate brand credibility, and learn about other users' experiences.

As a result, consumers increasingly rely on peer-generated content and influencer's opinions when evaluating unfamiliar skincare brands. Such information sources are often perceived as more authentic and trustworthy than traditional advertising, which further increases their influence on consumer purchasing behavior.

2.4. Influencer Marketing in the Beauty Industry

Influencer marketing has become an increasingly important promotional strategy within the beauty and personal care industry. Social media platforms enable brands to communicate directly with consumers while leveraging the credibility and influence of digital opinion leaders. This pattern is consistent with classic opinion-leadership theory, which suggests that consumers often rely on influential intermediaries when interpreting market information [14]. In the beauty industry, influencers often play an important role in shaping consumer perceptions and brand awareness.

Beauty influencers frequently act as intermediaries who translate product information into relatable experiences for their followers. Through product reviews, tutorials, and personal recommendations, influencers can effectively communicate brand messages and influence consumer attitudes toward skincare products

Previous studies suggest that influencer marketing significantly influences consumer trust, brand perception, and purchase intention [9]. Compared with traditional advertising, influencer-generated content is often perceived as more authentic and trustworthy because it is presented through personal experiences and informal communication styles.

As a result, consumers are more likely to rely on influencer recommendations when evaluating skincare products. Influencers can therefore play an important role in reducing information asymmetry between brands and consumers by providing accessible product information and personal evaluations.

In emerging markets, influencer marketing plays an even more important role due to the high level of social media usage among younger consumers. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube have become major channels for beauty product discovery and consumer engagement.

Through these platforms, influencers frequently share skincare routines, product reviews, and tutorial content that allow consumers to learn about new products in an accessible and engaging way. Such content can significantly shape consumer perceptions of unfamiliar brands and influence their purchasing decisions.

For international skincare brands entering new markets, collaborating with local influencers can help reduce cultural

barriers and enhance brand credibility. Local influencers often possess a deeper understanding of regional beauty standards, consumer preferences, and cultural expectations.

As a result, they can play an important role in communicating brand values and product benefits in ways that resonate with local audiences. By leveraging trusted local opinion leaders, international skincare brands can improve consumer trust, increase brand visibility, and accelerate market acceptance in unfamiliar markets.

2.5. Market Entry Strategies in Emerging Markets

International market entry strategies have been widely examined in the field of global marketing. Firms entering emerging markets often face a variety of challenges, including cultural differences, regulatory barriers, and intense market competition [15]. These challenges can increase market uncertainty and make it more difficult for foreign companies to establish a strong market presence.

To address these challenges, international firms frequently adopt strategic alliances with local distributors, retailers, or business partners. Such collaborations can help reduce market uncertainty, provide access to local market knowledge, and facilitate the adaptation of marketing strategies to local consumer preferences [16].

In the beauty industry, collaboration with local e-commerce platforms and retail partners has proven to be an effective strategy for international brands entering Southeast Asian markets. The rapid development of digital commerce in this region has created new opportunities for global beauty companies to reach consumers through online channels. This is consistent with broader evidence showing strong purchase intention on both local and international e-commerce platforms in Indonesia [17].

For example, partnerships with online beauty retailers allow international brands to access established customer bases and leverage local market expertise [18]. Such collaborations can also facilitate brand visibility, improve distribution efficiency, and enhance consumer trust in newly introduced skincare brands.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative case study approach to examine the market entry strategies of clean beauty brands in emerging markets. Case study research is widely used in international marketing studies because it enables researchers to explore complex market phenomena within real-world contexts [19].

Compared with purely quantitative approaches, qualitative case studies allow researchers to examine contextual factors, strategic decision-making processes, and market dynamics in greater depth. This approach is particularly useful when investigating how firms adapt their strategies to specific market environments and consumer conditions.

The case of Grown Alchemist, an Australian sustainable skincare brand, provides an appropriate context for analysing how international brands adapt their strategies when entering emerging markets such as Indonesia. The brand is widely recognized for its science-based formulations, environmentally friendly packaging, and strong sustainability-oriented brand positioning.

These characteristics make Grown Alchemist a relevant case for examining how clean beauty brands communicate sustainability values while expanding into new international markets. By analysing this case, the study aims to generate insights into how global skincare brands balance premium brand positioning with local market adaptation.

By focusing on a single case within a specific market environment, this study aims to generate in-depth insights into the strategic considerations involved in introducing sustainable skincare products into emerging markets. A case study approach allows researchers to examine complex interactions between consumer behaviour, market conditions, and corporate strategies.

Through this approach, the research seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how international clean beauty brands adapt their market entry strategies in response to local consumer preferences and competitive dynamics.

3.2. Data Sources

The study primarily relies on secondary data sources, including industry reports, academic literature, and market statistics. Secondary data analysis is widely used in marketing research when examining industry trends and consumer behaviour in rapidly evolving markets.

Using secondary data allows researchers to access a wide range of existing market information and industry insights that may not be easily obtained through primary data collection. This approach is particularly useful when analysing large-scale market trends and industry dynamics.

Data were collected from several reputable databases and market research organizations, including Euromonitor International, Statista, Nielsen, and McKinsey. These sources provide reliable and up-to-date information regarding market size, consumer preferences, industry growth trends, and competitive dynamics within the Indonesian skincare sector.

Industry reports from these organizations are widely used in academic and business research due to their comprehensive market analysis and extensive data coverage. Therefore, these sources provide a valuable foundation for understanding the development of the Indonesian skincare market.

In addition to industry reports, academic studies related to sustainable consumption, green marketing, influencer marketing, and international market entry strategies were also reviewed to provide theoretical support for the analysis. These academic sources help establish a theoretical framework for understanding consumer behaviour and marketing strategies within the skincare industry.

The literature was used to interpret key factors such as consumer preferences, competitive positioning, and strategic marketing approaches relevant to the Indonesian skincare market. By integrating insights from both industry data and academic research, the study provides a more comprehensive analysis of market entry strategies.

Publicly available information from brand websites, industry publications, and market analyses was also examined to identify strategic patterns among international skincare companies operating in Southeast Asia. These sources provide useful insights into brand positioning, product strategies, and marketing activities within the skincare industry.

By analysing these materials, the study aims to better understand how international beauty brands communicate their sustainability values and adapt their strategies when entering emerging markets.

3.3. Data Analysis

To ensure the reliability of the analysis, multiple secondary data sources were triangulated. Triangulation is a commonly used research strategy in qualitative studies that allows researchers to enhance the credibility and validity of findings by comparing evidence from different sources.

By examining data from industry reports, academic literature, and market analyses, the study identifies consistent patterns and cross-validates information across datasets. This process helps reduce potential bias and improves the robustness of the research findings.

The qualitative analysis followed a thematic analysis approach. Thematic analysis is commonly used in qualitative research to identify, analyse, and interpret patterns within a dataset. In this study, key themes were identified based on recurring patterns observed in the literature and industry reports.

The themes identified in the analysis include sustainability-driven consumption, price sensitivity in emerging markets, the influence of social media marketing, and the role of cultural adaptation in international branding strategies. These themes provide a structured framework for analysing the strategic factors influencing market entry in the Indonesian skincare industry.

The analysis focuses on three key dimensions that influence the success of international skincare brands entering emerging markets. These dimensions provide a structured framework for examining how international brands develop their market entry strategies in the Indonesian skincare market.

The three analytical dimensions are as follows:

(1) Consumer behaviour and purchasing motivations

(2) Competitive positioning within the skincare industry

(3) Strategic marketing approaches adopted by international brands

These dimensions allow the study to systematically evaluate the interactions between consumer preferences, industry competition, and corporate marketing strategies.

By synthesizing insights from both industry data and academic literature, the study identifies key factors influencing consumer adoption of clean beauty brands in Indonesia. This integrated approach allows the research to examine the relationship between consumer preferences, market conditions, and corporate marketing strategies.

Based on this analysis, the study also evaluates the strategic implications for international skincare brands seeking to enter the Indonesian market.

3.4. Research Limitations

Although this study provides valuable insights into market entry strategies for clean beauty brands, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the research relies primarily on secondary data sources rather than primary empirical data such as surveys or interviews.

As a result, the findings should be interpreted as exploratory insights rather than statistically validated conclusions. While secondary data provide valuable information about market trends and consumer behaviour, the absence of primary data may limit the ability to directly examine individual consumer perceptions and purchasing motivations.

Second, the study focuses on a single case study within the Indonesian market. While the findings provide useful insights into emerging market strategies, the results may not be directly generalizable to other industries or geographic regions.

Case study research is primarily intended to provide in-depth contextual understanding rather than broad statistical generalization. Therefore, the findings of this study should be interpreted as context-specific insights that may inform similar market entry situations.

Future research could address these limitations by conducting empirical studies using consumer surveys, interviews, or experimental methods to examine purchasing behaviour and brand perceptions in the clean beauty sector. Such empirical approaches would allow researchers to collect primary data and gain a deeper understanding of individual consumer motivations and attitudes toward sustainable skincare products.

In addition, comparative studies across multiple emerging markets could provide further insights into the international expansion strategies of sustainable skincare brands. Examining different cultural and economic contexts may help researchers better understand how market entry strategies vary across regions.

4. Findings

The analysis of market data and industry reports reveals several key factors that influence the success of international skincare brands entering the Indonesian market. These findings highlight the importance of consumer preferences, pricing expectations, distribution channels, and marketing communication strategies.

By examining these factors, the study identifies the main strategic considerations that international clean beauty brands should address when expanding into emerging markets such as Indonesia. An overview of the Indonesian skincare market development is presented in Table 1.

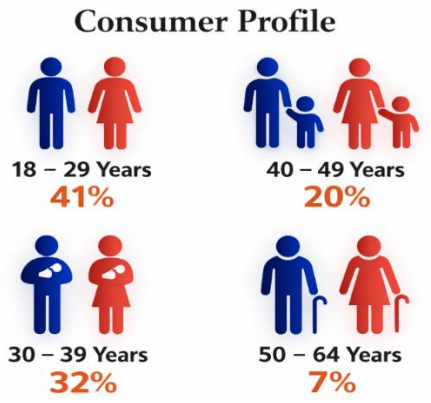
Table 1. Indonesia Skincare Market Data

Year	Market Size (USD Billion)	Annual Growth Rate (%)
2021	5.2	5.2
2022	5.7	5.8
2023	6.5	6.3
2024	6.9	5.8
2025	7.3	5.7

Source: Statista (2024)

4.1. Consumer Preferences for Sustainable Skincare

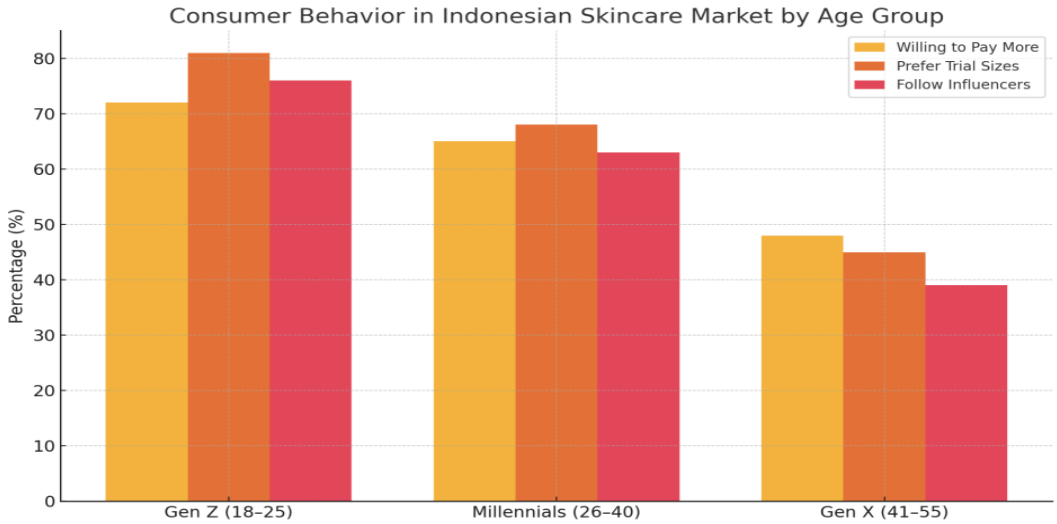
Indonesian consumers have demonstrated increasing interest in sustainable and environmentally friendly skincare products. Market reports indicate that consumers are becoming more concerned about product ingredients, safety, and environmental impact. These concerns have contributed to the growing popularity of clean beauty products in the Indonesian skincare market. Figure 2 illustrates the demographic structure of skincare consumers in Indonesia.



Source: YCP Solidiance Analysis, 2024

Figure 2. Consumer Profile of Skincare Users in Indonesia

Urban millennials and Generation Z consumers show strong awareness of clean beauty concepts and tend to prefer skincare products that emphasize natural ingredients and ethical production practices. As illustrated in Figure 3, younger consumers represent a particularly active segment in the Indonesian skincare market. These consumer groups are generally more exposed to global beauty trends and are more likely to seek products that align with their environmental and health-related values.



Source: Data adapted from Nielsen (2022), McKinsey & Company (2022), and Chung & Karampela (2021).

Figure 3. Consumer Behavior in Indonesian Skincare Market by Age Group

Research suggests that consumers in Indonesia are willing to pay a premium for skincare products that are perceived as safe, environmentally friendly, and beneficial for skin health [20]. This pattern is also consistent with prior skincare purchase-intention research, which emphasizes the importance of product safety, brand image, and trust in shaping consumer evaluations [21]. This indicates that sustainability-related product attributes can enhance the perceived value of skincare products among environmentally conscious consumers.

However, trust plays a critical role in consumer purchase decisions. When evaluating skincare products, consumers tend to rely heavily on peer recommendations, influencer reviews, and brand transparency. These information sources help reduce perceived risk and provide consumers with greater confidence when trying new skincare brands.

Another important factor influencing consumer preferences is religious and cultural considerations. Indonesia has the largest Muslim population in the world, which makes halal certification a significant determinant of consumer trust in skincare products and an increasingly important competitive factor in the beauty market [22, 23].

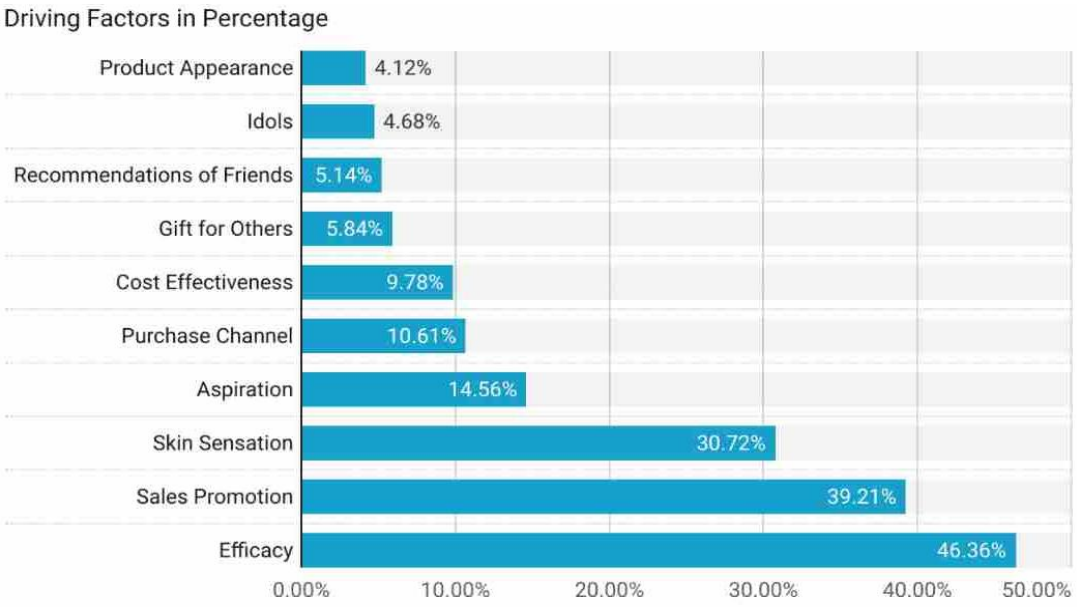
For many consumers, halal certification signals that a product complies with Islamic principles and meets specific standards related to ingredient sourcing and production processes. Therefore, brands that obtain halal certification and clearly communicate their compliance with local regulatory requirements are more likely to gain acceptance among Indonesian consumers.

4.2. Pricing Expectations in Emerging Markets

Price sensitivity remains an important characteristic of consumer behaviour in emerging markets and continues to influence repeat-purchase decisions in the Indonesian skincare context [24]. Although premium skincare products have gained popularity among urban consumers, many Indonesian consumers remain cautious when purchasing higher-priced cosmetic products.

As a result, consumers often prefer to test products before committing to full-size items. This behaviour reflects a desire to reduce purchasing risk and evaluate product effectiveness before making more expensive skincare purchases.

Industry data indicate that trial-sized products are particularly popular among younger consumers due to their affordability and convenience [25]. Smaller product sizes allow consumers to try new products at a lower cost and with less financial commitment. Figure 4 provides an overview of global skincare purchase frequency patterns that support this consumer behaviour.



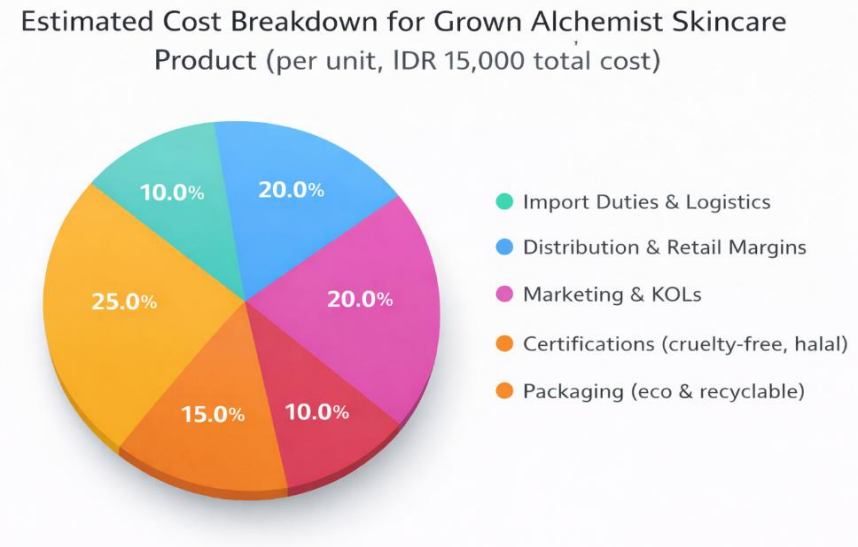
Source: Market.us, 2024

Figure 4. Monthly Skincare Purchase Frequency Among Global Consumers

By reducing the perceived risk associated with trying unfamiliar brands, trial-sized products encourage product experimentation and increase the likelihood that consumers will later purchase full-sized products.

As a result, many international skincare brands adopt tiered pricing strategies when entering emerging markets. Entry-level products are often offered at relatively affordable prices in order to attract first-time buyers and encourage product trial.

At the same time, full-sized products typically maintain premium pricing to preserve the brand's high-quality image and ensure long-term profitability. This pricing structure allows brands to balance product accessibility with premium brand positioning. The estimated cost structure of a representative skincare product is illustrated in Figure 5.



Source: Adapted from Herbes et al. (2020), Lindh et al. (2016), Paramita et al. (2024), and internal market cost simulation (2025).

Figure 5. Estimated Cost Breakdown for Grown Alchemist Skincare Product (per unit, IDR 150,000 total cost)

4.3. Distribution Channels and Retail Partnerships

The Indonesian skincare market is characterized by strong growth in digital commerce and social media-driven product discovery [3, 4]. The increasing popularity of online shopping has significantly changed the way consumers discover and purchase skincare products.

E-commerce platforms have therefore become important distribution channels for skincare brands seeking to reach younger consumers. These platforms provide convenient access to a wide range of products and allow consumers to easily compare brands and product features.

Online beauty retailers such as Sociolla have emerged as key distribution partners for international skincare brands entering the Indonesian market. These platforms provide controlled retail environments that focus on authentic beauty products and carefully curated brand selections.

In addition to their e-commerce functions, platforms such as Sociolla also operate online communities where consumers can share product reviews, skincare experiences, and beauty recommendations. These community features allow consumers to access peer-generated information, which can significantly influence their purchasing decisions. Table 2 summarizes the competitive positioning of major skincare brands operating in the Indonesian market.

Table 2. Key Competitor Analysis in Indonesia Skincare Market

Brand	Positioning	Advantages	Disadvantages
The Body Shop	Sustainable/Mass Market	Global recognition, ethical brand image	Lacks uniqueness
Innisfree	Natural/K-Beauty Trend	Youthful brand, strong on social media	High competition
Sociolla (Private Label)	E-commerce/Private Label	Strong distribution & data access	Low brand recognition

Source: Euromonitor (2023), McKinsey (2022), Brand websites

Offline retail channels also remain important for premium skincare brands. Department stores and high-end shopping malls offer experiential retail environments where consumers can physically test products and receive personalized skincare consultations. The value of these in-store encounters is consistent with experiential marketing theory, which emphasizes sensory and emotional engagement in shaping consumer responses [26].

These in-store experiences allow consumers to evaluate product texture, fragrance, and effectiveness before making purchase decisions. In addition, retail chains such as Guardian provide extensive store networks across Indonesia, enabling brands to expand their physical presence while maintaining strong visibility among target consumers.

The integration of online and offline retail channels has therefore become an essential component of successful distribution strategies in the Indonesian skincare market. By combining digital platforms with physical retail stores, skincare brands are able to reach a wider range of consumers and provide multiple touchpoints throughout the purchasing process.

Such omnichannel strategies allow brands to increase product accessibility while also maintaining strong brand visibility and consumer engagement.

4.4. Influence of Social Media and Opinion Leaders

Social media plays a central role in shaping consumer perceptions of skincare brands in Indonesia. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Shopee Live are widely used by consumers to discover new beauty products and learn about skincare routines. The scale of social media usage among Indonesian consumers is illustrated in Figure 6.



Source: Hootsuite, 2019

Figure 6. Social media user survey in Indonesia

Through these digital platforms, consumers can access product reviews, demonstrations, and user-generated content that provide additional information about skincare products. Such content can significantly influence how consumers perceive brand credibility and product effectiveness.

Previous research suggests that beauty influencers and key opinion leaders significantly influence purchasing decisions within the cosmetics industry [9, 11]. Influencers often act as intermediaries who interpret product information and communicate brand messages to their followers in a more relatable and accessible manner. This role also reflects the two-step flow of communication, in which opinion leaders mediate information for broader audiences [14].

By sharing personal experiences, product reviews, and skincare routines, influencers can translate technical product information into practical recommendations that are easier for consumers to understand.

In the Indonesian market, influencer marketing is particularly effective among younger consumers who rely heavily on social media for product recommendations. These consumers frequently seek advice from beauty influencers when selecting skincare products.

Partnerships with dermatologists, skincare experts, and trusted beauty influencers can enhance brand credibility and provide consumers with more reliable product information. Such collaborations can also reduce consumer uncertainty when evaluating unfamiliar skincare brands.

Consequently, influencer marketing has become a critical communication strategy for international skincare brands seeking to build brand awareness and consumer trust in emerging markets. By collaborating with well-known beauty influencers and opinion leaders, brands can introduce new products more effectively and increase their visibility among target audiences.

Such marketing strategies are particularly valuable for international brands that are attempting to establish their

presence in unfamiliar markets where consumers may have limited prior knowledge of the brand.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study provide several important insights into the challenges and opportunities faced by international clean beauty brands entering emerging markets such as Indonesia. By analysing consumer behaviour, pricing expectations, distribution strategies, and digital marketing practices, this study highlights several key strategic factors that influence the success of international skincare brands in the Indonesian market.

These findings contribute to a better understanding of how clean beauty brands can adapt their market entry strategies to align with local consumer preferences and market conditions.

First, the results highlight the growing importance of sustainability in consumer decision-making within the skincare industry. Consumers increasingly evaluate skincare products based on factors such as environmental impact, ingredient safety, sustainable packaging, and ethical production practices [8, 27].

This trend supports previous research suggesting that sustainable consumption has become an important driver of consumer behaviour in the cosmetics sector [6]. As consumers become more aware of environmental and health-related issues, they are more likely to support brands that demonstrate strong sustainability commitments and transparent production practices.

Second, the findings demonstrate that price accessibility remains an important consideration in emerging markets. While consumers may value premium skincare products, affordability and perceived value continue to play a significant role in shaping purchasing decisions.

The popularity of trial-sized products suggests that reducing financial barriers can encourage product experimentation and increase the likelihood of brand adoption among younger consumers. This finding highlights the importance of flexible pricing strategies when international skincare brands enter price-sensitive markets.

Third, the study emphasizes the critical role of digital platforms and influencer marketing in shaping consumer perceptions of skincare brands. Social media platforms have transformed the way consumers discover, evaluate, and compare beauty products.

As a result, influencer partnerships have become an essential component of modern marketing communication strategies in the cosmetics industry. Influencers can help brands communicate product benefits more effectively while also increasing brand credibility among target consumers.

Finally, cultural and regulatory factors must be carefully considered when international brands enter emerging markets. This is also consistent with Indonesia's broader sustainability and regulatory environment, which increasingly emphasizes responsible production and consumer protection [28]. In the Indonesian context, halal certification and local cultural adaptation play particularly important roles in shaping consumer trust and brand legitimacy.

Halal certification not only ensures compliance with religious requirements but also signals product quality and safety to consumers. Therefore, international skincare brands that obtain halal certification and demonstrate cultural sensitivity are more likely to gain acceptance in the Indonesian market.

Overall, the findings suggest that successful market entry strategies for clean beauty brands should combine sustainability-oriented brand positioning, accessible pricing structures, strong digital marketing presence, and localized product adaptation.

By integrating these strategic elements, international skincare brands can better align their offerings with local consumer preferences and market conditions. Such integrated strategies may enhance brand acceptance and support long-term growth in emerging markets such as Indonesia. Figure 7 presents an integrated marketing communication framework designed for Grown Alchemist's market entry strategy in Indonesia.



Visualized by the author

Figure 7. Integrated Marketing Communication Framework for Grown Alchemist in Indonesia

5.1. Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to the existing literature on international marketing and sustainable consumption in several ways. First, the findings extend previous research on green consumer behaviour by highlighting how sustainability considerations influence purchasing decisions within the skincare industry in emerging markets.

While much of the existing literature on sustainable consumption has focused on consumers in developed economies, this study provides additional insights into how sustainability-related factors influence consumer behaviour in developing markets such as Indonesia

While prior studies have primarily focused on environmentally conscious consumers in developed economies, this study demonstrates that sustainability is also becoming an increasingly relevant purchasing factor among urban consumers in developing countries.

The findings suggest that rising environmental awareness, increased access to digital information, and exposure to global beauty trends are contributing to the growing interest in sustainable skincare products in emerging markets.

Second, this research contributes to the literature on international market entry strategies by examining how clean beauty brands adapt their positioning when entering culturally diverse markets. The results suggest that successful market entry strategies require a balance between maintaining a consistent global brand identity and adapting to local cultural

contexts.

This finding highlights the importance of strategic localization when international brands expand into emerging markets. Firms must carefully adapt their marketing communication, product positioning, and regulatory compliance strategies to align with local market expectations.

Finally, this study contributes to the growing body of research on digital marketing by highlighting the influence of social media platforms and opinion leaders in shaping consumer perceptions of new skincare brands. The findings support the argument that influencer marketing has become an essential communication channel in industries where product evaluation relies heavily on experiential information.

In particular, the results demonstrate how influencer-generated content can help reduce consumer uncertainty and enhance brand credibility when introducing new skincare products in emerging markets.

5.2. Managerial Implications

The findings of this study provide several practical implications for managers and international skincare companies seeking to enter emerging markets such as Indonesia. By examining consumer preferences, pricing strategies, distribution channels, and digital marketing practices, this research highlights several strategic considerations that firms should take into account when expanding into the Indonesian skincare market.

First, brands should emphasize sustainability and ingredient transparency when communicating with consumers. As environmental awareness continues to grow, consumers increasingly evaluate skincare products based on their environmental impact, ingredient safety, and ethical production practices.

Therefore, companies should clearly communicate their sustainability commitments through packaging design, marketing campaigns, and corporate branding strategies, since packaging and visual cues can shape consumer attention and signal quality and sustainability values [27,29]. Transparent communication regarding product ingredients and production processes can help strengthen consumer trust and improve brand credibility.

Second, pricing strategies should balance premium brand positioning with product accessibility. While maintaining a premium brand image is important for high-end skincare brands, companies must also consider the relatively high level of price sensitivity in emerging markets.

Offering trial-sized products or entry-level items can reduce perceived financial risk and encourage product experimentation among first-time consumers. Such strategies allow brands to attract new customers while gradually building long-term brand loyalty.

Third, companies should prioritize digital marketing and influencer collaborations when building brand awareness. Social media platforms have become major channels for beauty product discovery, particularly among younger consumers who frequently rely on online content when evaluating skincare products.

Collaborating with local influencers who understand regional beauty trends and cultural preferences can help international brands communicate their product benefits more effectively. Such partnerships can also enhance brand credibility and strengthen consumer trust in new skincare products.

Finally, successful market entry requires careful adaptation to local cultural and regulatory conditions. In the Indonesian context, halal certification plays a critical role in influencing consumer trust and product acceptance.

Therefore, international skincare brands should carefully consider local certification requirements, regulatory standards, and cultural expectations when developing market entry strategies. Demonstrating respect for local cultural values can significantly improve brand acceptance and strengthen relationships with local consumers.

From an implementation perspective, these strategic recommendations should be translated into specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound objectives in order to support planning and evaluation [30]. The strategic objectives associated with this market entry strategy are summarized using a SMART framework, as presented in Table 3.

Table 3. SMART Objectives Table for Grown Alchemist (Indonesia Market Entry)

Timeframe	Specific Goal	Measurable Indicator	Achievable Justification	Relevant Justification	Time-bound Target
Short-term	Build brand awareness and initial sales	Achieve 5% brand awareness; IDR 1 billion in sales	Supported by partnerships with Sociolla/Guardian and KOL campaigns	Builds trust and visibility for a new high-end skincare brand	Within first 12 months (0–12M)
Medium-term	Improve customer conversion and brand loyalty	Achieve 2% market share in mid-high-end segment; 30% repurchase rate	Expansion through online/offline coverage and loyalty programs	Enhances customer retention and positions brand for sustainable growth	Month 13 to 36 (12–36M)
Long-term	Expand regionally and localize production for deeper	Launch in at least 2 SEA countries; establish local packaging/production	Leverages Indonesian success as foundation for regional scale-up	Strengthens local brand image, CSR alignment, and operational efficiency	Month 37 to 60 (36–60M)

6. Conclusion

This study examined the market entry strategies of clean beauty brands in emerging markets through a case analysis of the Indonesian skincare industry. Using secondary data and industry reports, the research explored key factors influencing consumer adoption of sustainable skincare products and the strategic approaches used by international skincare brands when entering the Indonesian market.

The results indicate that Indonesian consumers are increasingly interested in environmentally friendly skincare products. However, purchasing decisions are still strongly influenced by factors such as price sensitivity, social media recommendations, and cultural considerations.

The findings also suggest that influencer marketing, strategic retail partnerships, and localized product positioning are critical elements for successful market entry. International

skincare brands must therefore carefully design their marketing strategies to align with local consumer preferences and market conditions.

This study contributes to the literature on international marketing and sustainable consumption by highlighting the key strategic considerations for clean beauty brands expanding into emerging markets. The findings provide insights into how sustainability positioning, digital marketing strategies, and local cultural adaptation influence the success of international skincare brands.

In addition, the results offer practical implications for global skincare companies seeking to enter Southeast Asian markets, particularly those aiming to establish their presence in rapidly developing consumer markets such as Indonesia.

However, this research has several limitations that should be acknowledged. The analysis relies primarily on secondary data sources rather than primary empirical data such as consumer surveys or interviews.

Future research could address this limitation by collecting primary data to examine consumer purchasing behaviour and brand perceptions in greater detail. Empirical studies using surveys, interviews, or experimental methods may provide deeper insights into how consumers evaluate sustainable skincare products in emerging markets.

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