



## **Perceptions and Purchasing Behavior of Organic Lipsticks among Students Aged 16 to 18 in Hanoi**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study explored the awareness and purchasing behavior regarding organic lipsticks among students aged 16 to 18 in Hanoi. The sample comprised 101 individuals, 45.5% male and 54.5% female. Participants engaged in the study by responding to questions about demographic characteristics and their awareness and behavior related to organic lipstick purchases. The results indicated that most survey participants based their lipstick purchases on personal preferences regarding color, packaging, texture, and brand reputation. E-commerce platforms emerged as the most common source for purchasing lipstick among Hanoi's target demographic of 16-18-year-olds. A significant proportion of young people in this age group had never used organic lipstick, with a higher prevalence among males than females. Perceptions of different lipstick brands varied among the target audience. The survey results also revealed that most participants were interested in Vietnamese organic rose lipsticks made from natural extracts of fresh roses cultivated in natural gardens. Most customers were willing to spend between 100,000 VND and 300,000 VND on Vietnamese-produced organic rose lipstick. This indicates a demand for high-quality organic lipsticks at a reasonable price among the 16-18 age group.

Keywords: perceptions, purchasing, organic lipsticks

### **Introduction**

With the continuous development of society and the rapid growth of the economy, human living standards have significantly improved. In this context, public interest in quality of life, beauty, and personal care has also been increasingly heightened. According to a report from the market analytics platform Metric, sales in the cosmetics and beauty sector on e-commerce platforms in Vietnam reached 22.2 trillion VND within the first ten months of 2023 alone. However, the cosmetics industry still harbors numerous negative impacts on the environment and human health. The Worldwide Fund for Nature has indicated that since the 1980s, human demand has exceeded Earth's ecosystems' capacity. (Kim và Chung, 2011).

According to reports from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the European Union's Restriction of Hazardous Substances (ROHS) directive, certain ingredients used in the cosmetics industry contain harmful substances. In topical products, such as lipsticks, there is a higher potential for ingestion through the mouth, exacerbating the negative health impacts of these chemicals on human health.

In recent years, organic cosmetics have increasingly garnered interest and preference among beauty enthusiasts due to their safety and gentle effects on the skin and their reduced negative impact on the environment. According to a report by Future Market Insights (FMI), sales of organic cosmetics in 2024 are expected to rise on retail and e-commerce platforms catering to health-conscious individuals, environmentally aware consumers, and ethical shoppers. Among the popular types of organic cosmetics, organic lipsticks stand out for their numerous beauty benefits and positive health effects for users.

A report by Euromonitor International indicates that the demand for organic cosmetics among Vietnamese consumers is growing significantly. However, there needs to be research in Vietnam that provides an overview of the organic lipstick market and the awareness of organic lipsticks among young people in Hanoi. For these reasons, the author has chosen the topic "Perceptions and Purchasing Behavior of Organic Lipsticks Among Students Aged 16 to 18 in Hanoi" with the expectation of obtaining valuable scientific and practical results to complement existing studies and to propose measures to enhance young people's awareness of organic lipstick products. This research will also serve as a foundation for the research team to develop a startup project Triip featuring a line of organic rose lipsticks that are environmentally friendly for users, thereby promoting the message of consuming safe and gentle beauty products to consumers.

### **Literature Review**

#### **1. Lipstick**

Lipstick has long been a symbol of beauty worldwide. The earliest recorded use of lipstick refers to individuals in the Mesopotamian region. Ancient Egyptians ground various red materials to adorn their lips. By the 16th century, lipstick ingredients became safer, with Queen Elizabeth I leading the popularization of this cosmetic product. However, by the 18th century, lipstick was not widely accepted among ordinary people. During this period in England, women's use of cosmetics faced strong opposition.

In contrast, the French held a different attitude toward makeup. By the 1780s, cosmetics became indispensable among the upper class. Lipstick regained popularity in the 1920s. However, during the intense phase of World War II in the 1940s, lipstick became a scarce commodity. After the war, significant companies like Maybelline, Revlon, and CoverGirl launched extensive advertising campaigns for lipsticks, targeting women aged 16 and older. In the 1990s, brown, pink-red, and dark red shades dominated the market, with red lipstick remaining a favorite choice for women during significant events.

Common ingredients in lipsticks include waxes, oils, antioxidants, and emollients. Waxes provide structure to stick lipsticks. Lipsticks use a variety of oils and fats, such as olive oil, mineral oil, cocoa butter, lanolin, and petrolatum. (Ultras, 2022)

When applied to the lips, contemporary lipsticks are commonly classified based on their ingredients, structure, and characteristics. According to a report by Market Research Future, the matte lipstick segment currently dominates the market due to its ability to provide a modern and sophisticated appearance.

## 2. *Organic*

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, "organic" refers to growing crops and raising livestock without using artificial chemicals to produce food and other products.

According to the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), certified organic ingredients are natural and natural substances derived from controlled organic farming certified by a recognized and valid certifying body. (IFOAM, 2018; NATRUE, 2019).

In this research, the author uses the term "organic" with the following key characteristics:

- Contains ingredients derived from natural sources
- Safe for human health
- Non-damaging to the environment

## 3. *Rose*

Fossil evidence indicates that roses are among the most ancient flowers. They may have originated in Central Asia but have spread and grown wild across nearly the entire Northern Hemisphere. The cultivation of roses is believed to have begun in Asia around 5,000 years ago, and they have been an integral part of human civilization ever since. In Egypt, wall paintings and other artifacts depicting roses have been found dating back to the 5th century. Many centuries later, roses were regarded by the Romans as symbols of lavish luxury, associating them with love, beauty, purity, and passion. The American Rose Society lists over 40 rose varieties in its classification system. Generally, roses are categorized into Old Roses (introduced before 1867) and Modern Roses (developed after 1867). The nutrient content of roses varies by species, but they are generally a rich source of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants.

Roses are widely used in the pharmaceutical, cosmetic, and food industries due to their notable benefits for health and beauty. In particular, roses offer exceptional, safe, and gentle beauty and lip care advantages, providing deep hydration and effective lips softening. As a result, the lips become softer, smoother, and free from cracks and peeling. Daily lip care with rose-derived nutrients can improve lip pigmentation, making the lips appear more pink and vibrant. (Sức khỏe đời sống, 2018)

## 4. *Organic Lipstick*

Based on the criteria for organic cosmetics, organic lipsticks must contain a minimum percentage of natural ingredients and a maximum of substances derived from natural sources, with the primary ingredient being organically sourced. If natural ingredients are produced from certified organic components, the organic content will be calculated and added to the total organic amount (NATRUE, 2019).

Cosmetics are labeled as organic when they contain at least 95% organic ingredients and only 5% other ingredients. Even if the product is labeled as organic, it may still contain other ingredients at low concentrations.

## 5. *Organic rose lipstick*

Organic rose lipstick is made from safe, natural ingredients derived from rose petals cultivated and harvested using organic methods. Organic rose lipstick meets the standards for organic cosmetics, containing at least 95% organic ingredients and no more than 5% other components. It is gentle on users and does not harm the environment.

## 6. *Overview of the organic lipstick market in Vietnam and worldwide*

- Organic lipstick market in Vietnam

There have been studies and reports on the natural and organic cosmetics market in Vietnam; however, there needs to be more in-depth research specifically on the organic lipstick market in the country. According to a report by WM Strategy, the natural cosmetics market in Vietnam was valued at

USD 43.58 million in 2017. By 2021, this market had grown at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.29% per year, reaching a value of USD 53.55 million. In Vietnam, approximately 500 domestic companies are producing natural cosmetics.

- Organic lipstick market worldwide

According to statistics from Market Research Future, it is estimated that the natural and organic lipstick market will reach a value of USD 165.2 billion by 2023. This industry is projected to grow from USD 175.11 billion in 2024 to USD 407.9 billion by 2032, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 11.15% during the forecast period (2024 - 2032). Key factors driving market growth include the increasing removal of harmful chemicals and the introduction of organic makeup and personal care products. Growing awareness of the adverse effects of synthetic chemicals and artificial additives in cosmetics has led consumers to seek organic lipstick options.

### 7. *Overview of Channels for Trading Organic Lipstick Products*

According to a report by Market Research Future, the organic lipstick market, when analyzed by distribution channel, includes both in-store and out-of-store segments. The in-store segment predominates; a key factor driving this channel is the popularity and accessibility of natural and organic lipsticks in traditional retail stores.

Out-of-store shopping methods, such as online shopping, are also experiencing growth. According to a report from Similarweb, with a 16.7% increase in traffic compared to the previous year in January and February 2023, it is likely that many customers will turn to online shopping for their favorite beauty products. Notable online shopping channels include popular social media platforms (Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, etc.), e-commerce platforms (Shopee, TikTok Shop, Lazada, etc.), and official brand or authorized distributor websites.

Evaluating this market, the data analysis platform Metric indicates that retail prices for these products typically range from 200,000 VND to 500,000 VND.

### 8. *Overview of Organic Lipstick Products from Selected Cosmetic Brands*

- Rice Lip Balm (Cỏ mềm)

According to information from Cỏ Mềm, the Rice Lip Balm is one of the brand's best-selling products. The Rice Lip Balm is designed to help reduce lip discoloration and is safe for health. It is also used as a base for lip makeup. Cỏ Mềm's Rice Lip Balm is available in three main variations:

Colorless Rice Lip Balm – This variant is a colorless lip balm enriched with gac oil to help reduce lip discoloration.

Strawberry Rice Lip Balm – This version softens the lips and contains natural mineral oil that provides a subtle pink tint to the lips.

Orange Rice Lip Balm – This product features the sweet fragrance of orange essential oil and contains natural mineral pigments that impart a fresh orange tint to the lips.

- Simple Label Lip Color Balm (Innisfree)

According to information from Innisfree, the Simple Label Lip Color Balm with a rose scent is a vegan and safe lip balm. Simple Label is entirely derived from vegan natural ingredients such as Hydrangea and inorganic minerals and is certified EVE Vegan (an official vegan certification from France). The balm features an inorganic pigment formula, which has been dermatologically tested to ensure it is gentle on the lips, non-irritating, and hypoallergenic. The natural color palette can be used for both lips and cheeks. The product is available in three shades: Rose (a blend of burgundy and velvet rose tones), Peony (a refined pink reminiscent of peony petals), and Dahlia (a red shade akin to dahlias in sunlight).

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## Methods

The participants in the study were randomly selected by voluntarily responding to an online questionnaire shared on Facebook from June 23, 2024, to August 15, 2024. A total of 101 questionnaires were collected. The questionnaire included demographic questions such as gender, age, and average income, as well as scales measuring: (1) Perceptions and usage habits of lipsticks among students aged 16-18 in Hanoi, (2) The current state of organic lipstick use among students aged 16-18 in Hanoi, and (3) Demand for rose-scented organic lipsticks.

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## Results

### 1. *Perceptions and Usage Habits of Lipsticks Among Students Aged 16-18 in Hanoi*

- Factors Influencing Lipstick Purchasing Habits Among Students Aged 16-18 in Hanoi

The survey results indicate that 21.9% of respondents purchase lipsticks based on personal preferences regarding color, packaging, or texture. Brand reputation is also a significant factor influencing lipstick purchasing behavior, with 20.9% of participants citing it as a critical consideration. Product quality, ensuring safety for health, is a top priority for customers, accounting for 20.5% of responses. A segment of young individuals aged 16-18 tends to buy lipsticks based on recommendations from acquaintances (13.7%). Meanwhile, 13.0% of respondents chose lipsticks based on suggestions from

influencers (KOLs, KOCs). Knowledge about cosmetics, health, and environmental concerns has the most negligible impact on the purchasing decisions of individuals aged 16-18, accounting for only 9.9%.

- Sources of Lipstick Purchases Among Students Aged 16-18 in Hanoi

According to the survey results, e-commerce platforms are the most common source for lipstick purchases among the target demographic aged 16-18 in Hanoi, accounting for 47.4%. Official brand stores are also a popular choice among young people, representing 36.2%. Purchasing lipsticks through social media accounts for only 12.5%. Finally, the percentage of young individuals buying lipsticks from retailers is the lowest, at 3.9%.

## 2. *Current Usage of Organic Lipsticks Among Students Aged 16-18 in Hanoi*

- Current Usage Regarding the Use of Organic Lipsticks Among Students

Most respondents have never used organic lipsticks, with 65 individuals falling into this category compared to 36 who have used them. The proportion of young people aged 16-18 who have never used organic lipsticks is 64.4%. Even though 46 male participants were surveyed, fewer than the 55 female participants, the number of males who have never used organic lipsticks is higher, with 34 individuals.

Survey results regarding brand awareness show that 39.1% of students aged 16-18 are familiar with the Innisfree brand. Awareness of the Cỏ Mềm brand is lower, at 33.1%. Additionally, 27.8% of respondents are not familiar with either of the two brands.

- Perception of the Cỏ Mềm Homelab Brand and Its Rice Lip Balm

Based on the survey results, 59.4% of students aged 16 to 18 are unaware of Cỏ Mềm's Rice Lip Balm. Only 40.6% of participants are familiar with this product. Among them, most males (34 out of 46) do not know about the product. Conversely, more females are aware of the Rice Lip Balm, with 29 out of 55 respondents familiar with it.

Most students surveyed have never used Cỏ Mềm's Rice Lip Balm (65.3%). Some students who are aware of the product still do not use it. The number of females who have used the Rice Lip Balm is 24, which is greater than the number of males who have used it, which is 11.

The data also reveals that the most frequently chosen factor by students aged 16-18 for evaluating Cỏ Mềm's Rice Lip Balm is its benign ingredients, suitable for various age groups (34.6%). This lip balm is also perceived as having environmental protection benefits (28.4%). However, the product's aesthetic appeal and packaging convenience are less appreciated, with only 9.9% of customers selecting it for its beautiful and convenient packaging design.

In the future, females will be more inclined to use the Rice Lip Balm than males, with 32 out of 55 female students opting for "Yes." The total number of students interested in using the product in the future is 57 out of 101, which is higher than the number of those who do not wish to try it, which is 44 out of 101.

- Perception of the Innisfree Brand and Its Rose-Scented Lip Balm

Based on the survey results, 59.4% of students aged 16 to 18 are unaware of Innisfree's rose-scented lip balm. Only 40.6% of respondents are familiar with this product. This is consistent with the level of brand awareness regarding Innisfree's rose-scented lip balm, with both males and females showing equal awareness, each comprising 30 individuals.

Most respondents aged 16-18 have never used Innisfree's rose-scented lip balm, accounting for 67.3%. Those who have used it make up 32.7%. Among users, 19 are female, higher than the 14 males who have used the product.

The data also indicates that 25.2% of students aged 16-18 agree that Innisfree's rose-scented lip balm has attractive and convenient packaging. Additionally, the product is evaluated as having high quality, standing out among organic lipsticks available on the market (21.5%). However, only 15.9% of participants agree that the product has environmental protection benefits. Females are more inclined to use Innisfree's rose-scented lip balm than males, with 27 out of 55 female students opting for "Yes." The total number of students interested in using the product in the future is 48 out of 101, which is fewer than those who do not wish to try it, totaling 53 out of 101.

## 3. *Demand for Rose-Scented Organic Lipstick Products*

According to the survey results, 55.4% of respondents are interested in rose-scented organic lipstick products from Vietnam, made with natural extracts from fresh roses cultivated in natural gardens. Most interested in this product are females, with 35 out of 56 individuals.

Most customers will pay between 100,000 VND and 300,000 VND for Vietnamese-produced rose-scented organic lipsticks (58.4%). Only a tiny percentage of respondents are willing to pay more than 500,000 VND (5%). Both male and female respondents are predominantly willing to pay within the 100,000 VND to 300,000 VND range for this product.

Looking ahead, most respondents express demand for rose-scented organic lip balm produced in Vietnam, with 68.3% indicating interest. Of those interested, 46 were female, higher than the 23 males who expressed a desire to use the product.

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## Discussion

The survey results indicate that factors such as brand reputation, product quality, and recommendations from acquaintances/KOLs significantly influence students' lipstick purchasing decisions. Today, lipstick brands offer a wide range of colors, allowing users to easily find shades that match their skin tone, personal style, and outfits. Advances in lipstick production technology have led to diverse formulations, including matte, glossy, creamy, moisturizing, and liquid lipsticks. Each type provides a different sensation and effect on the lips, ranging from smooth and shiny to matte and velvety.

Moreover, brand reputation is a prominent factor influencing customers' purchasing behavior. A strong brand is one of a business's most valuable commercial assets. A strong brand not only enhances the likelihood of customers choosing your product or service over competitors but also attracts more customers, optimizes sales costs over time, and motivates customers to spend more or purchase more than initially intended. A strong brand generates higher revenue better profit margins, and contributes to more effective business growth year after year, ultimately providing higher returns on investment for shareholders and investors.

E-commerce platforms and official brand stores are the two most popular purchasing channels for lipsticks. This reflects the growing trend of online shopping among young consumers and their trust in official sales channels. Google's "Year in Search 2022" report on search behavior in Vietnam reveals a shift in consumer purchasing habits toward a preference for high-quality services and reliable products rather than just low prices. As a new era of e-commerce emerges, sellers and platforms must adapt to meet the increasingly stringent demands of the latest generation of consumers.

Although awareness of organic cosmetics is gradually increasing, the proportion of students who have used organic lipsticks still needs to be higher. This indicates significant potential for developing the organic lipstick market among students. Students exhibit varying levels of awareness regarding organic cosmetic brands, highlighting the need for enhanced brand and product promotion to improve consumer awareness.

Females tend to show more interest in organic lipsticks and cosmetics than males. This suggests that targeted campaigns focusing on female consumers are essential to capitalize on market potential fully. Students aged 16-18 are susceptible to trends and are often influenced by their peers. Therefore, creating communities and forums for young people to share experiences and review products could effectively enhance engagement and drive consumption.

Consumers are willing to pay a reasonable price ranging from 100,000 VND to 300,000 VND for high-quality organic lipsticks. This demonstrates a substantial demand for high-quality products and reasonable pricing.

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## Conclusion

The study has revealed insights into the perceptions and behaviors of students aged 16-18 regarding consuming and purchasing organic lipsticks. Organic lipsticks are increasingly capturing the interest of young people; however, their use and trade are yet to be widespread, indicating that the market still holds considerable potential for development. Although the study contributes to expanding understanding of young consumers' perceptions and behaviors towards organic lipsticks within the context of Vietnam, it does have several limitations:

- Firstly, the sample is predominantly concentrated in Hanoi and is relatively small, which limits its representativeness.
- Secondly, the significant disparity in demographic sample sizes is another limiting factor.
- Thirdly, the lack of qualitative research data, such as in-depth interviews, constrains the ability to explain the reasons behind observed differences.

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