
Cosmetic Purchasing Decisions with Brand Image as An Intervening Variable

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ABSTRACT

Cosmetic advertisements on social media easily influence many college students, so they buy cosmetics without paying attention to the product's safety. This study aims to analyze the influence of beauty influencer variables, product quality and halal labelling on cosmetic purchasing decisions that are intervened through brand image variables. The type of research used is quantitative research with a causality research design. The population in this study is 310 respondents. Using the random sampling technique, 76 people were sampled. The data analysis technique used is path analysis. The results showed that the beauty influencer variables and halal labelling partially did not affect cosmetic purchasing decisions. However, product quality and brand image significantly affected cosmetic purchasing decisions. The variables of beauty influencers and product quality affect the brand image of cosmetics, while halal labelling does not affect the brand image of cosmetics. When intervened with the brand image variable, the two variables, beauty influencers and product quality, affect cosmetic purchasing decisions. Meanwhile, halal labelling does not affect cosmetic purchasing decisions.

The implications of these results are crucial for marketers and brand managers in the cosmetic industry. Emphasizing product quality and cultivating a strong brand image can enhance purchasing decisions among consumers, particularly in a market influenced by social media. Additionally, while beauty influencers may not directly drive purchases, their impact on brand image cannot be overlooked. Companies should focus on forging relationships with reputable influencers who can authentically enhance brand perception. Future research could also explore the potential long-term effects of these variables on consumer behavior and preferences in the ever-evolving landscape of cosmetic marketing.

Keywords: Purchase Decision, Brand Image, Beauty Influencer, Product Quality, Halal Labeling.

INTRODUCTION

The many types of cosmetics produced at home and abroad circulating in Indonesia make competition in the cosmetics industry market more competitive. Cosmetics in Indonesia is growing at a very high pace and is one of the top markets, with an estimated increase in cosmetics growth of 7%. The flood of cosmetic items on the market affects a person's desire to buy and impacts purchasing decisions.

A purchasing decision is a stage in the decision-making process where a consumer buys. Before actually buying, consumers will go through several stages of the purchase process, namely the introduction of problems or needs, the search for information, the evaluation of alternatives, purchasing decisions, and post-purchase behaviour (Darmansah & Yosepha, 2020).

Not a few cosmetic business actors want to make a profit in a bad way, namely by utilizing several well-known cosmetic brands. This results in many dangerous cosmetic findings that will damage the brand image of a cosmetic product. Therefore, cosmetic business actors must be able to create a good brand image for business continuity and compete in the cosmetics industry. The brand image represents the overall perception of the brand formed from past information and experiences (Wulandari & Iskandar, 2018). A brand image considered good by consumers can make the company achieve a competitive advantage, increase product sales, and improve the company name.

Several factors mostly cause the decision to buy cosmetics for college students. First, a Beauty influencer is a marketing strategy or digital marketing using influencer marketing. Nowadays, the digital marketing of beauty influencers is a very important tool in product marketing because it has extraordinary appeal. Beauty influencers have inner beauty, charisma and credibility. (Amitay & Wahyoedi, 2020)

Beauty influencers are also role models in choosing cosmetics or beauty products. After finding out who beautiful women are roles was revealed that as many as 42.2% of Indonesian women think that beauty influencers are their role models in the beauty world (ZAP Beauty Index, 2020).

Secondly, product quality is defined as the characteristics of a product or service that joins on its ability to satisfy customer needs, which are expressed or implemented. According to (Foster & Sidharta, 2019), or a particular product, the consumer will not mind buying an item at a relatively high price as long as the quality of the product is good. Product quality is crucial so companies can compete and dominate the market.

Third, halal labelling is defined as an attribute as a consumer information medium to gain trust in a product mentally. Halal labelling is a very important element to be used as the basis for consumer decision-making. So far, the global halal cosmetics industry is showing signs of improvement. This is also due to the large Muslim population in Indonesia.

Based on the results of a survey through interviews with several FEBI UIN North Sumatra students, many of them are easily influenced by the cosmetic advertisements they see on social media, so that it makes them interested in buying them without paying attention to whether or not the cosmetic products used are safe.

North Sumatra State Islamic University Medan is an Islamic-based character education university. With the provision of Islamic education, students are expected to be able to apply it in life. One of them is about consumption by Islamic law. Female students are a critical community that, when viewed in terms of the information they obtain and their ability to digest information, is a community that can choose the products they consume based on the information they have obtained well.

The study seeks to address the critical question of how various factors—specifically beauty influencer variables, product quality, and halal labeling—affect the choices made by these consumers when it comes to cosmetics. A pressing concern arises from the observation that many college students purchase cosmetics without considering the safety of the products, raising questions about the role of marketing in shaping their decisions.

In his research (Pranawa & Abiyasa, 2019), Amirullah stated that purchasing decisions are an integration process carried out by combining knowledge to evaluate two or more alternative behaviours and choose one. This means that the decision-making process is strongly influenced by consumer behaviour, and a process is a form of solving consumer problems to meet their needs and desires. According to Kottler and Kettler in the study (Lengkawati & Saputra, 2021), the indicators in purchasing decisions are the selection of products or services, brand selection, timing, and selection of payment methods or methods. Purchasing decisions result from several factors that influence consumers during the decision-making process, such as purchasing behaviour, shopping habits, brands purchased, and so on.

Kotler and Keller in their research (Chandrawati & Setiawati, 2021), said that brand image is a representation of the overall perception of the brand formed from information and consumers' past experiences of the brand. When consumers hear or see a brand, brand image is what consumers feel and think. For the brand image to be received positively and strongly, the placement of the brand image in the minds of consumers must be carried out continuously. According to Foster, Sidharta & Rahman (2018), indicators that can measure brand image are the favorability of brand associations, the strength of brand associations, and the uniqueness of brand associations. As revealed by (Cahyani & Sutar, 2020), the brand image of purchasing decisions have a positive and significant effect.

Beauty influencers are people who have a very big influence on beauty products such as cosmetics. Usually, beauty influencers will also tell their experiences in using a cosmetic or beauty product. In providing their experience, beauty influencers must have an objective nature of what they feel about using a cosmetic (Sinaga & Kusumawati, 2018). The ability of beauty influencers can be seen from several aspects, including expertness, trustworthiness, and attractiveness (Yunita, 2021). Nowadays, beauty influencers are often used as an alternative in the selection of cosmetic products. As said (Silalahi, 2021) in her research, beauty influencers can improve consumers' purchasing decisions and be considered business actors.

The American Society for Quality states that product quality is a characteristic inherent in a product that can distinguish the degree and degree of excellence of a product (Rohman, 2018). Kottler and Armstrong in research (Erlangga et al., 2021), explained that product quality is one of the main means of positioning for marketers because quality will directly

impact the performance of products or services. Therefore, quality has a close relationship with customer value and satisfaction. Consumers will choose products that make them satisfied, which can be seen in the quality of a product. De Giovanni (2024) and Manik et al., (2023) said there are eight dimensions to determine product quality, including performance, features, reliability, conformance, durability, serviceability, aesthetics, and perceived quality. The study's results (Ristanti, 2020) have also supported the research, where the quality of the product has a significant effect on purchasing decisions.

Halal labelling is the inclusion of writing or a statement of the halalness of a product on the product packaging. Halal labelling containing recognition of the halalness of a product is issued by the Halal Product Assurance Organizing Agency/BPJPH based on a written halal fatwa issued by the Indonesian Ulema Council/MUI as a sign of the halalness of a product (Azizah, 2019). Based on the total population, according to BPS data in 2010, 87.18% of Indonesia's population is Muslim. This makes the population's need for halal food and non-food products even greater (Warto & Arif, 2020). Based on Article 1 Number 3 of PP No. 69 of 1999, it is stated that aspects to see halal labelling include pictures, writing, combinations of images and writings, and sticking to packaging. Then Nugraha, Chen, and Yang (2022) explained that halal labelling could be seen from the aspects of knowledge, assessment, and trust. This is in line with the research conducted by Rafiki, Hidayat and Nasution (2024) according to the results of her research, halal labelling partially has a significant and positive effect on purchasing decisions.

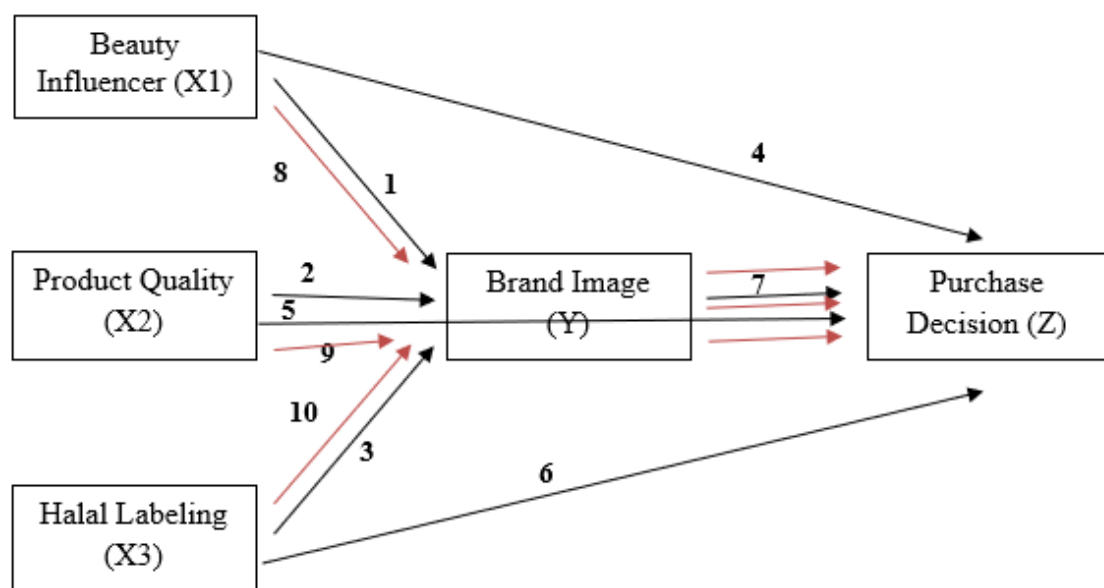


Figure 1
Research Conceptual Framework

The research posits several hypotheses focused on understanding the various influences on brand image and purchasing decisions in the cosmetic industry. The first set of hypotheses (H1, H2, and H3) examines the significant influences of beauty influencers, product quality, and halal labeling on brand image. This line of inquiry seeks to unravel how effective beauty influencers can shape perceptions, whether high product quality

enhances the brand image, and if halal labeling has a discernible impact on how consumers view cosmetics.

Additionally, the study explores purchasing decisions through the lens of brand image with a second set of hypotheses (H4, H5, and H6). It delves into the significant influences exerted by beauty influencers, product quality, and halal labeling on consumers' choices to purchase cosmetic products. The hypotheses aim to clarify whether the presence of trusted beauty influencers, the perceived quality of products, and the assurance provided by halal labeling directly affect the likelihood of making a purchase.

Further, the hypotheses (H7, H8, H9, and H10) emphasize the pivotal role of brand image in consumer decision-making. The research questions whether brand image itself significantly influences purchasing decisions and if it mediates the effects of beauty influencers, product quality, and halal labeling on those decisions. Collectively, these hypotheses paint a comprehensive picture of the complex interactions between influencer marketing, product characteristics, and consumer perceptions, ultimately aiming to inform cosmetic brands on effective marketing strategies that resonate with their target audience.

METHOD

This research is quantitative research with a causality research design. The population in this study was students of the Islamic Economics Study Program class of 2018, Faculty of Economics and Islamic Business UINSU Medan, which was 310 students. The sampling technique used simple random sampling by determining the number of samples using the Slovin formula. A sample of 76 students was obtained. The data sources used in this study are primary and secondary data.

The data collection techniques used in the study were questionnaires and literature studies. The analysis method used is path analysis. The data processing process uses SPSS 25. In this study, there were three exogenous variables, namely beauty influencers, product quality and halal labelling, one endogenous variable, namely purchasing decisions, and one variable exogenous and endogenous, namely brand image.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The emergence of digital marketing has transformed the landscape of consumer behavior, particularly in the cosmetics industry. As brands increasingly rely on social media platforms to reach their target audiences, understanding the factors that drive consumer purchasing decisions has become paramount. This research investigates the interconnected roles of brand image, halal labeling, beauty influencers, and product quality in shaping consumer preferences.

Brand image serves as a vital determinant in how consumers perceive and interact with cosmetic products. A strong brand image can influence purchasing decisions by fostering trust and loyalty among consumers. In parallel, halal labeling has gained prominence as more consumers prioritize ethical considerations and transparency in product sourcing.

This research aims to explore how the presence of halal certification impacts consumer perceptions and whether it enhances brand image in the cosmetics sector.

Moreover, beauty influencers play an influential role in shaping consumer trends and preferences through their endorsements and recommendations. Their ability to connect with audiences and authenticate brands makes them critical players in the marketing strategy of cosmetic companies. Additionally, product quality remains a fundamental aspect of consumer satisfaction and loyalty. High-quality products not only fulfill consumer expectations but also reinforce positive brand image.

By analyzing these variables, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors driving cosmetic purchasing decisions. The insights gained from this research will be invaluable for brands looking to refine their marketing strategies and enhance their appeal in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

Table 1. Outcomes of Path Structure Analysis

Sub Structure I			
Model	B	T	Sig.
Beauty Influencers	.432	4.937	.000
Product Quality	.462	4.566	.000
Halal Labeling	.013	.144	.886
ANOVA			
R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig.
.809	.655	45.481	.000
Sub Structure II			
Model	B	T	Sig.
Beauty Influencers	.178	1.662	.101
Product Quality	.254	2.092	.040
Halal Labeling	-.107	-1.153	.253
Brand Image	.496	3.977	.000
ANOVA			
R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig.
.787	.619	28.859	.000

By looking at the value of beta standardized coefficients on each variable, the structural equation of line I analysis is:

$$Y = PYX1 + PYX2 + PYX3 + e1, \text{ or}$$

$$Y = 0,432X1 + 0,462X2 + 0,013X3 + 0,360e1$$

By looking at the value of beta standardized coefficients on each variable, the structural equation of line II analysis is:

$$Z = PZX_1 + PZX_2 + PZX_3 + PYZ + e_2, \text{ or}$$

$$Z = 0,178X_1 + 0,245X_2 + -0,107X_3 + 0,496Y + 0,402e_2$$

Table 2. Path Analysis Calculation Result

Variable Relationships	Direct Influence	Indirect Influence	Total Influence
X1 --> Y	0,432		
X2 --> Y	0,462		
X3 --> Y	0,013		
X1 --> Z	0,178		
X2 --> Z	0,254		
X3 --> Z	-0,107		
Y --> Z	0,496		
X1 --> Y --> Z		0,214	0,928
X2 --> Y --> Z		0,229	0,958
X3 --> Y --> Z		0,006	0,509

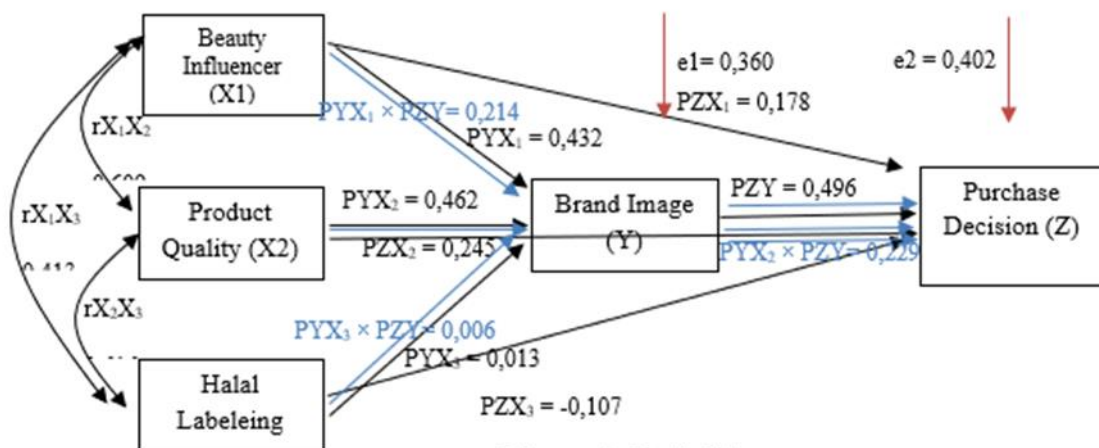


Figure 2. Path Diagram

Sobel Test

The Influence of Beauty Influencers on Purchasing Decisions through Brand Image

$$Sab = \sqrt{b^2 sa^2 + a^2 sb^2 + sa^2 sb^2}$$

$$Sab = \sqrt{0,495^2 0,075^2 + 0,369^2 0,125^2 + 0,075^2 0,125^2}$$

$$Sab = \sqrt{0,001 + 0,002 + 0,000}$$

$$Sab = \sqrt{0,003}$$

$$Sab = 0,054$$

$$t = \frac{ab}{sab}$$

$$t = \frac{0,182}{0,054}$$

$$t = 3,370$$

From the results of the calculation of the Sobel test above, it is known that with the calculated t value of 3,370, which is greater than t table 1,992, the brand image can mediate the relationship between the influence of beauty influencers on purchasing decisions.

Improving Product Quality on Purchasing Decisions through Brand Image

$$Sab = \sqrt{b^2sa^2 + a^2sb^2 + sa^2sb^2}$$

$$Sab = \sqrt{0,495^2 0,104^2 + 0,474^2 0,125^2 + 0,104^2 0,125^2}$$

$$Sab = \sqrt{0,002 + 0,002 + 0,000}$$

$$Sab = \sqrt{0,005}$$

$$Sab = 0,070$$

$$t = \frac{ab}{sab}$$

$$t = \frac{0,234}{0,070}$$

$$t = 3,342$$

From the results of the calculation of the Sobel test above, it is known that with the calculated t value of 3.342, which is greater than the t table of 1.992, the brand image can mediate the relationship between the influence of product quality on purchasing decisions.

The Influence of Halal Labeling on Purchasing Decisions through Brand Image

$$Sab = \sqrt{b^2sa^2 + a^2sb^2 + sa^2sb^2}$$

$$Sab = \sqrt{0,495^2 0,074^2 + 0,011^2 0,125^2 + 0,074^2 0,125^2}$$

$$Sab = \sqrt{0,001 + 0,000 + 0,000}$$

$$Sab = \sqrt{0,000}$$

$$Sab = 0,031$$

$$t = \frac{ab}{sab}$$

$$t = \frac{0,005}{0,031}$$

$$t = 0,161$$

Ax

From the results of the calculation of the Sobel test above, it is known that the calculated t value of 0.161, which is smaller than t table 1.992, the brand image cannot mediate the relationship between the influence of halal labelling on purchasing decisions.

From the results of partial statistical research, the exogenous beauty influencer variable (X1) significantly affects the endogenous brand image (Y) variable. This means that the information beauty influencers provide about a cosmetic product will form a brand's image. If the information conveyed by beauty influencers is in the form of positive information, it will grow a good brand image of a cosmetic product and vice versa. The results of this study support the research conducted by Atika Hermanda.

From the results of partial statistical research, the exogenous variable of product quality (X2) significantly affects the endogenous brand image (Y) variable. In cosmetic products, students can see the quality of a cosmetic product from the level of durability, suitability for all skin types, and so on. The better the quality provided by a cosmetic product, the better it will cause a good memory in the consumers of the cosmetic product. This will make the cosmetic product's brand image well known. This, in turn, enhances the brand image of the cosmetic product in the eyes of consumers. These findings align with the research conducted by Rastogi, Agarwal, and Gopal (2024), which highlights the crucial role of product quality in establishing a positive brand image.

The quality of cosmetic products can be assessed through several relevant indicators. One of the key indicators is product durability. For instance, a long-lasting lipstick provides greater comfort for users, as they do not need to reapply it frequently. Durability is particularly important for consumers with busy daily routines. In this context, products that can remain effective on the skin for extended periods are likely to be more appreciated and remembered by consumers, thus contributing to a strong brand image. (Foster, Sidharta & Rahman, 2018)

In addition to durability, the suitability of products for various skin types is also a critical factor in evaluating cosmetic quality. Products designed for all skin types, including sensitive skin, become more appealing to consumers with diverse needs and preferences. For example, a cosmetic brand that offers a foundation with hypoallergenic and non-comedogenic formulations will attract consumers concerned about skin reactions. By providing inclusive solutions, the brand not only demonstrates care for consumer needs but also reinforces its image as a leader in the cosmetics industry that prioritizes consumer-friendly practices.

From the results of partial statistical research, the exogenous variable of halal labelling (X3) did not significantly affect the endogenous brand image (Z) variable. Although the student is a student at an Islamic University, halal labelling also does not affect the cosmetic products' brand image. Despite the respondents in this study being students at an Islamic university, the halal label surprisingly did not influence the brand image of cosmetic products. This finding aligns with research conducted by Rafiki, Hidayat, and Nasution in 2024, which also indicated that halal labeling does not have a significant impact on brand perception among Muslim consumers.

In this context, it is essential to understand what halal labeling means and how it influences brand image. The halal label serves as certification that a product meets the requirements set forth by Islamic law. This certification is often seen as a guarantee of

quality and safety, particularly for Muslim consumers who are attentive to halal aspects when selecting products. However, the results of this study reveal that, although the halal label carries significant meaning, it does not always translate into a positive brand image in the minds of consumers.

One reason why the halal label does not significantly affect the brand image of cosmetics is due to the more complex perceptions held by consumers. Today's consumers consider not only the aspect of halal but also other factors such as product quality, innovation, and aesthetic value. For instance, a student may be more attracted to the quality of ingredients used in cosmetic products rather than solely the halal label displayed on them. This underscores that while halal labeling is important, it does not operate independently in shaping brand image; rather, it exists alongside various other considerations that influence consumer choices.

From the results of partial statistical research, the exogenous beauty influencer variable (X1) did not significantly affect the endogenous variable of purchasing decision (Y). Although there is much information conveyed by beauty influencers about a cosmetic product, and they are used as a means of promoting cosmetic products, beauty influencers do not influence the decision to purchase cosmetic products in students of the Islamic Economics Study Program Class of 2018 FEBI UINSU Medan. This can be caused because using cosmetics will provide side effects directly. Then, the effect can be directly seen by people of the same age, which will affect a person's confidence to appear in public. Therefore, in the Islamic Economics study program, students are very careful in deciding to buy cosmetic products. Despite the extensive information provided by beauty influencers regarding cosmetic products and their role in promoting these products, their influence on purchasing decisions appears limited.

This phenomenon may be attributed to the inherent nature of cosmetic use, which can produce immediate and visible side effects. Since the effects of cosmetic products can be closely observed by peers of the same age group, students may feel a heightened sense of caution when it comes to making choices about cosmetics. In a setting where appearance can significantly impact confidence and social interactions, students in the Islamic Economics program tend to exercise considerable deliberation before investing in cosmetic products.

These insights align with the research conducted by Chetioui, Benlafqih, and Lebdaoui (2020), which further underscores the idea that while beauty influencers may generate awareness and provide information, the decision-making process for purchasing cosmetics is influenced by personal and social factors. Ultimately, this cautious approach among students highlights the complexity of consumer behavior in the cosmetics market, especially within specific demographic and cultural contexts.

From the results of partial statistical research, the exogenous variable of product quality (X2) significantly affects the endogenous variable of purchasing decision (Y). Product quality is the most important thing estimated by students of the Islamic Economics study program Class of 2018 FEBI UINSU Medan in deciding to buy a cosmetic product. Product

quality has a relationship with the satisfaction of the cosmetic product's benefits and will eventually impact purchasing decisions. Students will choose cosmetic products that have high quality because they want good feedback for themselves based on the benefits they feel in them after using a cosmetic product. This finding is supported by prior research conducted by Chen, H., Chen, H., and Tian (2022), which emphasizes the importance of product quality in influencing consumers' purchase intentions. Their study illustrates that consumers are more likely to make purchasing decisions based on the perceived quality of a product, suggesting that a strong reputation for quality can significantly enhance consumer satisfaction and loyalty.

Thus, the alignment of these findings reinforces the notion that students prioritize product quality above other factors, such as influencer endorsements, when engaging with the cosmetics market. Given the emphasis on the tangible benefits and self-satisfaction derived from high-quality products, this highlights the critical role of product quality as a decisive factor in the purchasing decisions of consumers within this demographic context.

From the results of partial statistical research, the exogenous variable of halal labelling (X3) did not significantly affect the endogenous variable of purchasing decision (Y). Halal labelling does not affect the decision to buy cosmetics for FEBI UINSU students because in purchasing cosmetic products, students pay more attention to the quality of their products. Supporting this finding, research conducted by Nugraha, Chen, and Yang (2022) highlights that even among Muslim consumers, the influence of halal labeling on purchasing intent can vary depending on other prevailing factors. Their study suggests that when consumers focus on product quality, aspects like halal certification may become secondary considerations in their purchasing process. In this context, FEBI UINSU students appear to favor the tangible benefits and perceived quality of cosmetic products over the presence of halal labeling.

This alignment of findings emphasizes that while halal certification is important, particularly in Islamic contexts, it may not be the decisive factor in purchasing decisions when consumers prioritize other quality indicators. Consequently, this highlights the complexity of consumer behavior, suggesting that marketers should focus on enhancing product quality to capture the attention and loyalty of this demographic.

From the results of partial statistical research, the exogenous brand image (Z) variable significantly affects the endogenous variable of purchasing decision (Y). Students of the Islamic Economics study program Class of 2018 FEBI UINSU Medan will decide to buy cosmetic products with a good brand image. Brand image is closely related to a person's beliefs and preferences regarding a brand. Suppose the image of a cosmetic brand is well known in the minds of consumers. In that case, the cosmetic product will be used by consumers as an alternative to several choices when deciding to buy cosmetic products. This conclusion is further supported by research conducted by Tsai et al. (2020), which explored how a strong brand image can sway consumers' purchasing decisions. Their study demonstrated that a positive brand perception plays a vital role in engaging consumers, as

it fosters a sense of loyalty and preference that leads individuals to choose recognized brands over lesser-known alternatives.

Thus, these findings reinforce the notion that students are more likely to opt for cosmetic products with a strong, favorable brand image, utilizing this influence as part of their decision-making process. As a result, cosmetic brands aiming to capture the attention of this demographic should focus on building and maintaining a compelling and trustworthy brand image, as this can significantly enhance their appeal and ultimately influence purchasing behavior.

This study found that beauty influencers influence purchase decisions that are intervened through brand image. This means that cosmetic products introduced by beauty influencers will increase the brand image of the cosmetic product. Suppose the brand image of a cosmetic product is well known. In that case, it will affect the decision to purchase cosmetics for students of the Islamic Economics study program Class of 2018 FEBI UINSU Medan. For this reason, beauty influencers can be used as a profitable means of promoting a cosmetic product.

This conclusion aligns with the research conducted by Crisafulli and Singh (2022), which illustrates how digital influencers can effectively shape buying decisions in various markets, including B2B environments. Their study emphasizes that the perceived competence and authority of influencers can lead to stronger brand perceptions and increased consumer trust. Similarly, beauty influencers harness this power by sharing experiences and insights about products, thereby building credibility and enhancing brand image.

In light of these findings, it is clear that beauty influencers serve as effective promotional tools that can boost the visibility and appeal of cosmetic products. By leveraging their influence, brands can foster a more favorable image that resonates with consumers, ultimately driving purchasing behavior. Thus, companies should strategically engage beauty influencers in their marketing campaigns to capitalize on the positive effects of influencer endorsement on brand image and consumer decisions.

This study found that product quality affects purchasing decisions that are intervened through brand image. This means that although both partially the quality of the product affects the purchase decision and brand image, and when testing the mediation of the product quality does not have a significant effect on the purchase decision through the brand image. Supporting this perspective, Petcharat and Leelasantitham (2021) emphasize the critical role of product quality within the online purchase decision-making process. Their research illustrates how consumers often weigh product quality heavily when navigating their choices, suggesting that a positive perception of quality can enhance overall consumer satisfaction and drive purchasing intent.

Moreover, Rao, Rao, and Acharyulu (2021) explore the dynamics between electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), purchasing intentions, and brand image. Their findings highlight that while brand image serves as an essential mediator, the direct impact of product quality

on purchasing decisions remains paramount. This aligns with the current study's conclusion that even though brand image can influence consumer perceptions, product quality still stands out as a crucial determinant in buying behavior. Together, these studies underscore the necessity for brands to prioritize product quality as a foundational attribute, ensuring that it is effectively communicated to enhance brand image, which, in turn, shapes purchasing decisions.

This study found that halal labelling does not affect purchasing decisions that are intervened through brand image. This means that both partially halal labelling does not affect the purchase decision and brand image. When mediation testing is carried out, halal labelling still does not significantly affect purchasing decisions through brand image.

This conclusion aligns with the work of Abdullah and Abdul Razak (2020), who explored the relationship between halal food awareness and purchase decisions among university students in Brunei Darussalam. Their research found that despite the significance of halal labeling within certain contexts, it did not consistently translate into a decisive factor for purchase intentions, especially when examined alongside religiosity as a moderating variable. This suggests that consumers prioritize other elements in their decision-making processes, such as product quality and overall satisfaction, over halal certification alone.

Furthermore, Wang, Kim, and Kim (2021) examined the importance of customer reviews and brand equity in the restaurant industry, highlighting that brand equity can mediate purchasing decisions more effectively than independent labeling criteria. Their findings underscore that factors like brand reputation and customer experiences often hold greater weight in driving consumer choices, which may explain why halal labeling did not significantly influence purchase decisions in the context of this study.

CONCLUSION

The results showed that the beauty influencer variable and halal labelling partially did not affect the purchase decision, but the product quality variable influenced the purchase decision. When intervened with the brand image variable, the two variables, beauty influencers and product quality affect the purchase decision variable, but the halal labelling variable still does not affect the purchase decision variable. This proves that in buying a cosmetic product, students of the Islamic Economics Study Program FEBI UINSU Class of 2018 are not directly influenced by beauty influencers and product quality. However, halal labelling does not affect the decision to buy cosmetics for students, as well as after being intervened by the brand image variable. This makes students need to increase their trust and understanding of halal literacy and the importance of consuming a product that has been guaranteed halal.

Further, the study primarily examines the direct influence of beauty influencers, product quality, and halal labeling on purchasing decisions, potentially overlooking other crucial

factors such as marketing strategies, peer influence, and personal experiences with cosmetic products.

For future research, it is recommended to expand the sample size and include a more diverse demographic to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Investigating a broader range of factors that impact purchasing decisions—such as marketing channels, consumer attitudes, and psychological factors—could provide a more comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior in the cosmetics market. Additionally, conducting longitudinal studies might help track changes in consumer perceptions over time, particularly concerning halal literacy and the evolving role of beauty influencers in shaping brand image and purchasing decisions. These insights could offer significant implications for brands aiming to connect with conscious consumers and effectively promote their products in a competitive marketplace.

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