

The impact of product reviews and price on purchase intention for Skintific skincare products: Trust as a mediating variable

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to determine the influence of product reviews, price, which is mediated by trust on buying interest at the State University in Padang City. The population is Padang State University (UNP), Andalas University (UNAND), and Imam Bonjol State Islamic University (UIN IB) with a sample size of 290 respondents. Data was collected using a questionnaire and data was processed using SmartPLS 4. The results are (1) Product reviews have a positive and significant influence on purchasing interest. (2) Price has a positive and significant influence on buying interest. (3) Product reviews have a positive and significant influence on trust. (4) Price has a positive and significant influence on trust. (5) Trust does not have a positive and significant influence on buying interest. (6) Product reviews do not have a positive and significant influence on purchasing interest through trust. (7) Price does not have a positive and significant influence on buying interest through trust.

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INTRODUCTION

Modern society's evolving lifestyle demands perfection in various aspects, including appearance. Appearance is crucial for everyone, influencing self-care and boosting self-confidence. Many individuals are turning to beauty products to enhance their looks, with options ranging from local to international brands popular in Indonesia. Skintific, a Canadian skincare brand founded by Kristen Tveit and Ainn-Kristin Stokke, is notably popular in Indonesia. Skintific offers innovative and affordable products, helping women maintain beauty and confidence. Its 5x Ceramide Barrier Repair Moisturizer Gel is particularly viral in Indonesia.

According to the compass.co.id team in Ivana (2022), these brands are the people's favorites based on the sales data in the following image:

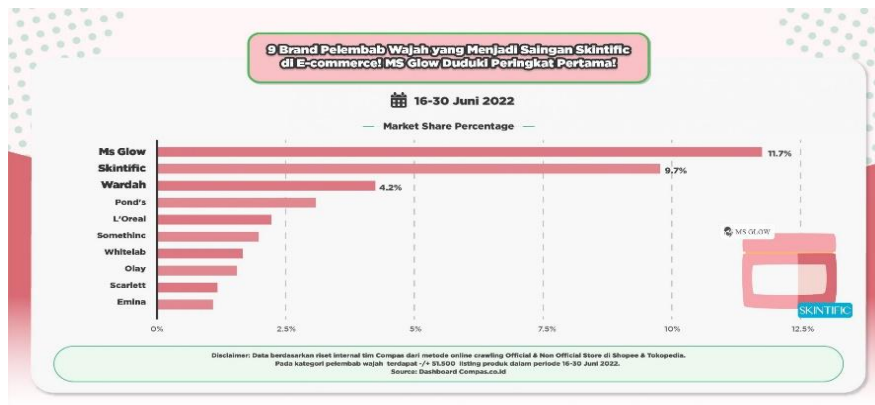


Figure 1. Best-Selling Facial Moisturizer Skincare Brands in E-Commerce

Source: Ivana, 2024

According to the graph above, Skintific was ranked among the top 9 best-selling facial moisturizer brands in e-commerce for 2022. It achieved the second position with a total sales share of 9.7%. However, Skintific lags behind its competitor Ms Glow, which leads with a sales share of 11.7%. To enhance its market presence and significantly influence consumer purchasing decisions, Skintific needs to implement effective marketing strategies. Consumer buying interest, an aspect of consumer behavior, requires consumers to make informed choices when selecting products.

One approach to impact buying interest is through product reviews. Consumers often check reviews before making a purchase, as these reviews reflect others' experiences with the product or service and can sway buying interest. When considering a purchase, individuals seek information about the product and assess the reliability of the seller. Reviews are essential for evaluating product quality.

In addition to product reviews, price plays a significant role in shaping buying interest. It is a major factor in purchase decisions and greatly impacts consumer satisfaction. Addressing issues related to price and product reviews can be achieved by incorporating features that review both aspects. Trust in product reviews and prices is a key element affecting online consumer buying interest.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Buying Interest

Kotler states that "Buying interest can emerge after exposure to a product, leading to a desire to purchase it." Similarly, Al Hafizi and Ali (2021) define "Consumer buying interest as a behavioral response to a product, reflecting a consumer's inclination to make a purchase." Ferdinand (2006:129) identifies buying interest through several indicators:

1. Transactional interest: The tendency of an individual to buy a product.
2. Referential interest: The inclination to recommend products to others.
3. Preferential interest: The behavior of favoring a particular product.
4. Exploratory interest: The habit of seeking information about a product of interest.

Product Review

According to Sinaga and Hutapea (2022), "A product review is an assessment of a product or service based on the experiences of consumers who have used it, where they share their experiences and rate their satisfaction." Weisstein et al., as cited by Sinaga and Hutapea (2022), identify three indicators of product reviews:

1. Conformity: Reviews that accurately reflect the real experience.
2. Understanding (Understandability): Reviews that clearly explain the product.
3. Expressiveness: Reviews that effectively communicate clear objectives and purposes.

Price

Kotler and Armstrong (2008: 345) describe "Price as the amount of money charged for a product or service, representing the value that customers exchange for the desire to acquire or use the product or service." They outline the following price indicators:

1. Price affordability: The price that consumers can reasonably afford based on the company's setting.
2. Matching price with product quality: Consumers often use price as an indicator of quality.
3. Matching price with benefits: Consumers decide to buy if they believe the benefits of the product outweigh the cost.
4. Benefit Price based on competitiveness: Consumers compare prices of different products to assess value.

Trust

Sulistiyari (2012) defines consumer trust as the belief in a product's various attributes and the benefits they offer. Mayer et al. (1995) identify three key factors that influence a person's trust in others:

1. **Ability:** Consumers expect assurance of satisfaction and security from the seller during transactions.
2. **Benevolence:** The seller's willingness to ensure mutual benefit and satisfaction for both the seller and the consumer.
3. **Integrity:** This pertains to the consistency and honesty of a salesperson's actions and practices, which impacts the reliability of the information provided to consumers.

Hipotesis Penelitian

Product Review on Buying Interest

Khammas (2008), as referenced in Handayani and Usman (2021), describes online customer reviews as a way for buyers to learn about evaluations from other consumers who have purchased the product.

H₁ : Product reviews have a significant effect on buying interest.

Price on Buying Interest

Price is a controllable factor that influences whether or not a product is accepted by consumers.

H₂ : Price has a significant effect on buying interest

Product Review on Trust

Product reviews reflect consumer opinions on different aspects of a product's information and evaluation. As a result, reviews significantly impact consumer trust and can influence their interest in purchasing the product based on the feedback received.

H₃ : Product reviews have a significant effect on trust

Price on Trust

Pavlou and Dimoka (2006) note that "The physical distance between buyers and sellers in online shopping introduces uncertainty for buyers, as they often deal with unfamiliar and unbranded sellers." In online transactions, consumers are often willing to pay more for vendors they perceive as more trustworthy.

H₄: Price has a significant effect on trust

Trust on Buying Interest

Ricky and Adrian (2012) state that "Trust has a direct impact on consumer buying interest; as consumer trust increases, so does their interest in purchasing."

H₅: Trust has a significant effect on buying interest

Product Review on Buying Interest are mediated by trust

Product reviews can be considered a modern marketing communication tool that influences and plays a role in the buying interest process.

H₆: Product reviews have a significant effect on buying intention through trust as a mediating variable.

Price on Buying Interest are mediated by trust

Alfatiha and Budiarmo (2020) assert that "The relationship between price and the decision to make a purchase remains important, even when considering the aspect of buying interest."

H₇ : Price has a significant effect on buying interest through trust as a mediating variable

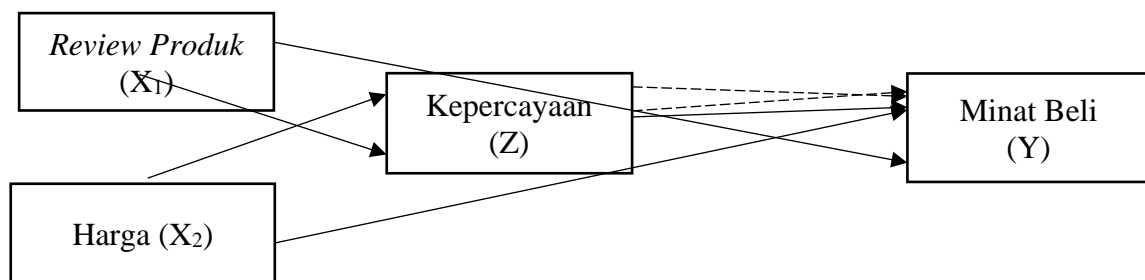


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework

METHOD

This research is a quantitative study employing a causal approach. Hayati and Dharani (2022) explain that "Quantitative research methods involve using numerical data to acquire knowledge and gather information on the subject of interest." The study was conducted at the State University in Padang City during July. The primary data for this research were collected through the distribution of questionnaires via Google Forms to respondents.

Table 1 Definition Operational

No	Variabel	Definisi Operasional	Indikator
1.	Buying Interest (Y)	Consumer buying interest is a behavior driven by the desire to purchase a product.	1. Transactional interest. 2. Refrential interest. 3. Preferential interest. 4. Explorative interest.
2.	Product Review (X ₁)	Product reviews consist of the opinions of State University students in Padang City, detailing their experiences with Skintific skincare products based on personal use.	1. Conformity (Conformity). 2. Understandability 3. Expressiveness.
3.	Harga (X ₂)	Price is the exchange rate, represented in money or other goods, for the benefits derived from Skintific skincare products by State University students in Padang City at a specific time and location.	1. Price affordability. 2. Pice compatibility with product quality. 3. Price compatibility with benefits.

4	Kepercayaan (Z)	Trust is the readiness of State University students in Padang City to accept risks when buying Skintific skincare, despite the inability to control or monitor the actions of the seller they rely on and believe in.	4. Price according to ability or price competitiveness.
			1. <i>Ability</i>
			2. <i>Benevolence</i> .
			3. <i>Integrity</i> .

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study uses a data analysis method with PLS (Partial Least Squares), a variance-based structural equation modeling (SEM) technique that simultaneously tests both the outer model (measurement model) and the inner model (structural model).

Table 2. Outer Loading

Variabel	Minat Beli (Y)	Review Produk (X1)	Harga (X2)	Kepercayaan (Z)
Minat Beli 1	0,741			
Minat Beli 2	0,841			
Minat Beli 3	0,773			
Minat Beli 4	0,744			
Minat Beli 5	0,769			
Minat Beli 6	0,744			
Review Produk 1		0,805		
Review Produk 2		0,729		
Review Produk 3		0,808		
Review Produk 4		0,775		
Review Produk 5		0,760		
Review Produk 6		0,792		
Harga 1			0,841	
Harga 2			0,785	
Harga 3			0,811	
Harga 4			0,816	
Harga 5			0,830	
Harga 6			0,771	
Harga 7			0,797	
Kepercayaan 1				0,809
Kepercayaan 2				0,784
Kepercayaan 3				0,819
Kepercayaan 4				0,777
Kepercayaan 5				0,799
Kepercayaan 6				0,779
Kepercayaan 7				0,747

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2024

From the table above, it is evident that all instrument values for each variable in this study have an outer loading value exceeding 0.7. Therefore, it can be concluded that the convergent validity of each variable's instrument in this study is confirmed as valid.

Table 3. Output AVE

Variabel	<i>Average variance extracted (AVE)</i>
Minat Beli (Y)	0,592
Review Produk (X1)	0,606
Harga (X2)	0,652
Kepercayaan (Z)	0,621

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2024

According to the table above, the average variance extracted (AVE) values for all variables in this study exceed 0.5, indicating that convergent validity is established as valid.

Table 4. Cross Loading Value

Variabel	Minat Beli (Y)	Review Produk (X1)	Harga (X2)	Kepercayaan (Z)
Minat Beli 1	0,741	0,563	0,572	0,544
Minat Beli 2	0,841	0,681	0,690	0,659
Minat Beli 3	0,773	0,622	0,613	0,542
Minat Beli 4	0,744	0,587	0,531	0,547
Minat Beli 5	0,769	0,678	0,648	0,619
Minat Beli 6	0,744	0,627	0,551	0,555
Review Produk 1	0,677	0,805	0,671	0,672
Review Produk 2	0,575	0,729	0,541	0,544
Review Produk 3	0,662	0,808	0,651	0,646
Review Produk 4	0,607	0,775	0,595	0,597
Review Produk 5	0,645	0,760	0,596	0,654
Review Produk 6	0,641	0,792	0,675	0,718
Harga 1	0,666	0,652	0,841	0,710
Harga 2	0,586	0,602	0,784	0,635
Harga 3	0,591	0,630	0,811	0,632
Harga 4	0,657	0,636	0,816	0,704
Harga 5	0,622	0,649	0,830	0,736
Harga 6	0,676	0,655	0,771	0,670
Harga 7	0,629	0,696	0,797	0,716
Kepercayaan 1	0,614	0,687	0,668	0,809
Kepercayaan 2	0,603	0,640	0,685	0,784
Kepercayaan 3	0,640	0,672	0,716	0,819
Kepercayaan 4	0,606	0,613	0,684	0,777
Kepercayaan 5	0,576	0,655	0,659	0,799
Kepercayaan 6	0,592	0,653	0,648	0,779
Kepercayaan 7	0,517	0,631	0,643	0,747

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2024

The table above shows that the correlation value of each variable with its own indicators is higher than its correlation with other indicators. Since each indicator's correlation value is above 0.7, it can be concluded that all indicators in this study possess discriminant validity.

Table 5. Cronbach Alpha dan Composite Reability

Variabel	Cronbach's alpha	Composite Reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)
Minat Beli (Y)	0,862	0,865	0,902
Review Produk (X1)	0,870	0,872	0,929
Harga (X2)	0,911	0,912	0,897
Kepercayaan (Z)	0,898	0,899	0,920

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2024

The table above reveals that all variables have a Cronbach's Alpha value exceeding 0.6 and Composite Reliability above 0.7. Therefore, it can be concluded that all variables exhibit relatively good reliability.

Table 6. R Square

Variabel	R Square	R Square Adjusted	Kriteria
Minat Beli (Y)	0,715	0,713	Kuat
Kepercayaan (Z)	0,782	0,781	Kuat

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2024

The table above shows that the R Square value for the dependent variable, buying interest, is 0.715 or 71.5%. This indicates that 71.5% of the variance in buying interest can be accounted for by the independent variables, product review and price. The remaining 28% is attributed to other variables not included in the independent variables.

Additionally, the R Square value for the trust variable is 0.782, or 78.2%. This indicates that 78.2% of the variance in the trust variable can be explained by the independent variables, product review and price. The remaining 22% is attributed to other factors not accounted for by these independent variables.

Table 7. Q Square

Variabel	Q ² predict
Minat Beli (Y)	0,705
Kepercayaan (Z)	0,799

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2024

The table above shows that the mediating variable, trust, has a Q Square value of 0.799, and the dependent variable, purchase intention, has a Q Square value of 0.705, both of which are greater than 0. This indicates that the model in this study demonstrates strong predictive relevance.

Tabel 8. Dirreocr Effect

H	Variabel	Original sample (O)	Sample maen (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Keterangan
H1	Product Reviews (X1)->Buying Interest (Y)	0,506	0,509	0,081	6,230	0,000	Diterima
H2	Price (X2) ->Buying Inerents(Y)	0,341	0,339	0,075	4,567	0,000	Diterima
H3	Product Review(X1) -> Trust (Z)	0,400	0,402	0,055	7,286	0,000	Diterima
H4	Price(X2) -> Trust (Z)	0,531	0,529	0,054	9,906	0,000	Diterima

H5	Trust (Z) -> Buying Interenst (Y)	0,046	0,045	0,084	0,546	0,585	Ditolak
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Source: Primary Data Processed, 2024

1. Hypothesis Testing 1: Product review has a significant effect on buying interest

The table above indicates that the relationship between the product review variable (X1) and purchase intention (Y) has an original sample value of 0.506. This suggests that the product review variable positively impacts purchase intention by 0.506. Additionally, the table shows P values less than 0.05, specifically 0.000, and a t statistic value greater than 1.96, at 6.230. Therefore, it can be concluded that the hypothesis test supports the idea that product reviews have a significant positive effect on buying interest. Hypothesis Testing 2: Price has a significant effect on buying interest.

The table above shows that the relationship between the price variable and buying interest has an original sample value of 0.341. This indicates that the price variable positively influences buying interest by 0.341. Additionally, the table reports P values below 0.05, specifically 0.000, and a t statistic value exceeding 1.96, at 4.567. Therefore, it can be concluded that the hypothesis test demonstrates a significant positive effect of price on buying interest.

2. Hypothesis Testing 3: Product Review has a significant effect on Trust.

The table above shows that the relationship between the product review variable (X1) and trust (Z) has an original sample value of 0.400. This suggests that the product review variable positively affects trust by 0.400. Additionally, the table indicates P values less than 0.05, specifically 0.000, and a t statistic value greater than 1.96, at 7.286. Therefore, it can be concluded that the hypothesis test confirms a significant positive effect of product reviews on trust.

3. Hypothesis Testing 4: Price has a significant effect on Trust

The table above reveals that the relationship between the price variable (X2) and trust (Z) has an original sample value of 0.531. This indicates that the price variable positively impacts trust by 0.531. Additionally, the table shows P values below 0.05, specifically 0.000, and a t statistic value exceeding 1.96, at 9.906. Consequently, it can be concluded that the hypothesis test demonstrates a significant positive effect of price on trust.

4. Hypothesis Testing 5: Trust is not significant on Buying Interenst (Y).

The table above shows that the relationship between the trust variable (Z) and purchase intention (Y) has an original sample value of 0.046. This indicates that trust does not positively influence purchase intention by 0.046. Additionally, the table reports P values greater than 0.05, specifically 0.585, and a t statistic value less than 1.96, at 0.545. Therefore, it can be concluded that the hypothesis test shows trust does not have a significant positive effect on purchase intention and thus is rejected. This means trust does not significantly impact buying interest.

Table 9. Indirect Effect

H	Variabel	Original sample (o)	Sample mean (m)	Standard deviation (stdev)	T statistics (o/stdev)	P values	Keterangan
H6	Product Reviews (X1)-> Trust (Z) ->Buying Interenst (Y)	0,018	0,019	0,035	0,527	0,598	DITOLAK
H7	Price(X2) -> Trust (Z) -> Buying Interest (Y)	0,024	0,023	0,044	0,551	0,582	DITOLAK

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2024

1. Hypothesis Testing 6: Product Review (X1) on Buying Interest (Y) through the Trust variable (Z) has no significant effect.

The table above indicates that the mediating variable, Trust (Z), does not significantly mediate the relationship between the product review variable (X1) and buying interest (Y), with an original sample value of 0.018. This suggests that the product review variable does not positively impact buying interest through trust. Additionally, the table shows P values greater than 0.05, specifically 0.598, and a small t statistic value of 0.527, which is less than 1.96. Therefore, it can be concluded that the hypothesis test reveals no significant effect of product reviews on buying interest through the trust variable.

2. Hypothesis Testing 7: Price on Buying Interest through the Trust variable has no significant effect.

The table above shows that the mediating variable, Trust (Z), does not mediate the relationship between the price variable (X2) and buying interest (Y), with an original sample value of 0.024. This indicates that the price variable does not positively influence buying interest through trust. Additionally, the table presents P values greater than 0.05, specifically 0.582, and a t statistic value of 0.551, which is lower than 1.96. Consequently, it can be concluded that the hypothesis test shows no significant effect of price on buying interest through the trust variable.

DISCUSSION

The effect of product reviews on buying interest

The test results indicate a significant impact of product reviews on buying interest. Product reviews serve as a tool to gauge an individual's assessment of a product. Therefore, having product reviews is crucial in determining whether a person is interested in purchasing the product. Supporting this finding, previous research by Ardianto (2020) demonstrates that product reviews have a positive and significant effect on buying interest.

The effect of price on buying interest

The results indicated that the price variable significantly influences buying interest. Price is a crucial factor for consumers when evaluating whether a product's cost aligns with its quality. Supporting this finding, research by Tania, Hermawan, and Izzuddin (2022) demonstrates that price significantly affects buying interest. This suggests that price plays a key role in consumer decision-making, especially when choosing between products, as it becomes a major consideration if there is a significant disparity between competitors.

The influence of product reviews on trust

The findings of this study indicate that product review variables have a significant positive impact on trust. Product reviews provide insights into previous consumer opinions, offering evaluations and information about the product.

The influence of price on trust

The research results indicate that the price variable has a significant positive effect on trust. This is due to the uncertainty buyers face when multiple sellers offer the same product at slightly different prices. Reliable pricing can enhance trust between consumers and sellers. Supporting this, previous research by Ardianto (2020) demonstrates a significant positive effect of price on trust. Consequently, consumers are more willing to pay a higher price if they perceive it as more trustworthy.

The influence of beliefs on interest

The study's results reveal that the trust variable does not significantly impact buying interest. This implies that, despite consumers' confidence in the product's quality or reputation, it is not sufficient to drive them to make a purchase.

The influence of product reviews on buying interest is mediated by trust

The research results show that the product review variable does not significantly impact buying interest through trust. This suggests that consumer reviews alone are insufficient to build trust and, therefore, do not significantly boost buying interest.

The influence of price on buying interest is mediated by trust

The research results indicate that the price variable does not significantly affect buying interest through trust. This means that while the price may impact confidence in the product's quality or value, it is not sufficient to significantly boost buying interest.

CONCLUSSION

There is a significant effect of product reviews on buying interest. Price significantly influences buying demand. Product reviews have a notable impact on trust, as does price. However, trust does not significantly affect buying interest, nor do product reviews influence buy interest through trust.

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