

How Product Quality and Safety Drive Wardah Skincare Purchase Intention: The Moderating Role of Influencers

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Abstract

Keywords:

product quality, product safety, influencer, purchase intention

We investigate whether product quality and product safety shape the intention to buy Wardah skincare. This study also tests if influencers can strengthen that link. This study involved 100 Wardah skincare users recruited via purposive sampling technique. Data were collected using a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire and analyzed with PLS-SEM. The results reveal that perceptions of product quality and safety have a significant positive impact on purchase intention. Surprisingly, the role of influencers did not significantly moderate the relationship between product quality, safety, and purchase intention. This indicates that consumers prioritize functional value and safety assurance over promotional figures. The key takeaway for brands: invest in better formulation and clear safety certification first. Use influencers mainly to educate customers about ingredients, not just for endorsements. Future work could add brand trust or perceived risk and reach a wider sample. Practically, marketing budgets should prioritize product R&D and BPOM certification over paid influencer posts.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesian's cosmetics and skincare industry has expanded significantly in recent years, fueled by heightened consumer awareness of skincare as part of a modern lifestyle for both women and men. Skincare is no longer viewed as a secondary need; it has become a daily essential, driving demand for products that are safe, high-quality, and aligned with consumer expectations. This shift compels brands to compete not only on innovation but also on trust and transparency.

Among local brands, Wardah has maintained a competitive position by emphasizing product quality and safety. A 2024 survey by beautynesia.id reported that Wardah ranked fourth in skincare sales with 456.781 units sold (Apriliani, 2024), reflecting strong purchase intention among Indonesian consumers. Prior studies identify perceived product quality, safety assurance, and influencer intention. In skincare, product quality encompasses formulation, texture, efficacy, and sensory attributes that shape satisfactions, BPOM approval, and transparent ingredient information that mitigate perceived risk. Meanwhile, influencers act as digital opinion leaders whose content can affect consumer trust and choices.

Purchase intention refers to consumers' likelihood of purchasing a product after evaluating its attributes, shaped by internal factors such as perceived value and trust (Latifah & Fikriah, 2024) and external factors such as eWOM and brand image in digital environments (Novilia et al., 2025). For skincare, product quality and safety become key external cues that reduce perceived risk.

Among these, product quality is a primary determinant of purchase intention. For skincare, product quality spans ingredient formulation, texture, fragrance, and efficacy in addressing skin concerns (Tambunan et al., 2024). As a key signal, superior quality fosters positive perceptions and reduces perceived risk, thereby increasing purchase intention.

Beyond quality, product safety is critical in skincare purchases as unsafe products pose risks of irritation and skin damage. Because safety attributes are unobservable, consumers rely on certifications, BPOM approval, and transparent ingredient information as trust cues (Wu et al., 2021). High safety risk directly reduces consumer trust and purchase intention (Hibatullah et al., 2023), making safety a key factor that protects consumers while shaping positive perceptions.

Meanwhile, advances in digital technology and social media have reshaped how consumers gather information and make buying decisions. A notable trend in digital marketing is leveraging influencers for promotion. Influencers are individuals with large social media followings who can sway their audience's opinions and choices through the content they post. In skincare marketing, influencers often provide reviews, testimonials, and recommendations based on their personal experience in using a skincare product. According to research conducted by (Gunawan et al., 2024), influencers have a significant influence on consumers' purchase intention through the trust and attractiveness they display on social media. In this study, influencers are positioned as a moderating variable that can strengthen or weaken the effect of product quality and product safety on purchase intention.

This study is motivated by inconsistencies in the findings of previous research regarding product quality, product safety, and the role of influencers on consumers' purchase intention. Several studies have shown inconsistent results, thereby creating a research gap that needs further investigation. Research by (Utami & Telagawathi, 2025) states that product quality has a significant effect on skincare purchase intention, while (Nabillah et al., 2023) reported that product quality had no substantial partial impact on purchase intention. A similar pattern is also found in the product safety variable, where research conducted by (Harahap & Afandi, 2023) shows that product safety has a significant effect on consumers' purchase intention, yet (Luna & Sudarusman, 2022) concluded that product safety does not substantially affect purchase intention. In addition, the role of influencers as a moderating variable also shows mixed results, where research by (Selfiana et al., 2025) states that influencers are able to moderate the effect of product quality and product safety on purchase intention, while a study by (Dewi et al., 2026) found no significant moderating effect from influencers in this relationship. These conflicting findings suggest ongoing ambiguity about what truly drives consumer's purchase intention, especially for skincare products. Hence, this study is necessary to investigate purchase intention through the lenses of product quality and product safety, along with examining how influencers may strengthen or weaken these relationship.

Addressing these inconsistencies, this study examines how product quality and product safety affect purchase intention for Wardah skincare, and tests whether influencers strengthen or weaken these relationships. Theoretically, the research contributes to consumer behavior literature by clarifying the conditional role of influencers in high-risk product categories. Practically, the findings aim to guide Wardah in formulating marketing strategies that balance product attributes and digital communication. Academically, this study provides a foundation for future research on skincare marketing in emerging markets.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Product Quality

According to Kotler and Keller (as cited in Rahmawati et al., 2024), product quality is the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that determine its ability to satisfy stated and implied needs. According to Intakoris et al. (as cited in Tamrin et al., 2025), quality refers to performance as a direct representation of a product, including reliability, ease of use, aesthetics, and others. According to Hartini and Syaekhun (2022) (as cited in Aprilia et al., 2025), product quality is the ability of a product to perform its functions, including overall durability, reliability, accuracy, ease of operation and repair, as well as product attributes.

Product quality consists of several indicators as follows: 1) Product performance as perceived by consumers, which refers to the outcomes experienced by consumers after using the product; 2) Additional product advantages, such as the presence of *Advanced Niacinamide* for brightening and a variety of new products formulated with low pH levels; 3) Product durability, referring to the product's ability to remain intact, not easily damaged, not change in texture, and stay stable during use; 4) Conformance to specifications, referring to the alignment between the product and the results expected by consumers; 5) Product packaging innovation, referring to increasingly attractive and appealing packaging designs.

Based on the expert views above, product quality can be defined as a product's capacity to fulfill consumer needs and expectations by combining strong functionality, reliability, safety, and additional value. For skincare products, product quality carries even greater weight since it directly affects skin health. It determines whether a product meets its promised benefits, remains safe during use, and builds consumer trust and satisfaction.

Numerous prior studies have examined how product quality influences purchase intention. For instance, a study by (Qibtiyah et al., 2024) shows that product quality has a positive effect on consumer satisfaction and loyalty, which ultimately increases repurchase intention. In addition, a study by (Naini et al., 2022), published in the *Journal of Consumer Sciences*, also shows that product quality has a significant effect on consumer satisfaction, which serves as an important factor in shaping purchase intention and loyalty. Accordingly, this study hypothesizes that product quality has a significant effect on purchase intention. Therefore, it can be stated that the hypothesis of this study is that there is an effect of product quality on purchase intention.

H1: Product Quality Has a Significant Effect on Purchase Intention

Product Safety

Product safety is fundamental information that consumers need to know before purchasing a product (Asytuti & Astuti, 2021). Consumers will reconsider purchasing a product if its safety is still in doubt. Skincare safety, or product safety, is a condition in which a product complies with regulations and is monitored to ensure it does not harm users (Putriana, 2023). Cosmetic safety, or product safety, is related to consumer protection through control measures before and after a product is marketed, such as notification processes, inspections, and supervision.

According to (Sitorus et al., 2021), based on their research findings, cosmetic safety or product safety is indicated by products that have passed BPOM notification and do not cause skin irritation after usage testing. Product safety can be identified through several indicators, namely: 1) Product legality, such as BPOM certification, halal certification, Business Identification Number (NIB), CPKB or GMP certification, and product labeling in accordance with regulations; 2) Product ingredients that do not contain harmful substances and comply with cosmetic standards; 3) Clarity of product information, such as composition, directions for use, expiration date, and

usage warnings; and 4) Risk of side effects, such as allergies, irritation, or incompatibility after product use.

Based on the explanations and opinions of the researchers above, it can be concluded that product safety is a condition in which a product has met applicable regulatory and legal standards and has undergone monitoring processes to minimize risks, hazards, or adverse effects for consumers when used according to the instructions.

Extensive research has explored the link between product safety and purchase intention. For instance, a study by (Ngo et al., 2024) published in *PLOS ONE* states that perceived safety and consumer trust are important factors influencing purchasing decisions, where higher perceived product safety leads to higher consumer purchase intention. In addition, (Srisukwatanachai et al., 2020) show that perceived risk and product safety have a significant influence on purchase intention, especially when consumers consider the potential negative impacts that may arise from using the product. Based on this rationale, the present study proposes that product safety exerts a significant influence on purchase intention. Therefore, it can be stated that the hypothesis of this study is that there is an effect of product safety on purchase intention.

H2: Product Safety Has a Significant Effect on Purchase Intention

Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is the tendency or intention of an individual to make a purchase of a product or service based on a positive perception of that product (Rahmawan et al., 2025). Purchase intention arises when a person genuinely desires to obtain a product or service to fulfill their needs. According to Kotler (2016:182) (as cited in Pertiwi et al., 2024), purchase intention is consumer behavior in which consumers have the desire to choose and consume a product. Purchase intention is consumers' interest in buying cosmetic products despite certain considerations (such as *halal* labeling), indicating a behavioral tendency toward making a purchase (Setyaningsih & Albari, 2024). According to Tanzaretha (2021) (as cited in Atika et al., 2025), purchase intention is a desire that arises when customers have obtained information about the product or service being targeted and is shaped by customers' attitudes toward the product or brand, combined with external driving factors.

Factors influencing the formation of purchase intention include observations of others' attitudes and behaviors, namely the extent to which the opinions and actions of others can influence individuals (Faris et al., 2025). Purchase intention can be measured through several indicators that prompt consumers to buy: 1) Interest, which refers to consumers' attraction or attention toward a product; 2) Purchase desire, which describes the motivation or intention to make a purchase or repurchase a product after previous usage experience; and 3) Influencing others, which reflects the level of consumers' interest and confidence in a product, leading to the willingness to share positive experiences and influence others' purchasing decisions.

Drawing from the perspectives above, purchase intention can be understood as consumer's tendency or desire to purchase a product or service, formed once they develop positive perceptions, knowledge, and interest. This intention is shaped by brand attitudes and both internal and external factors-including available information and peer opinions-that steer consumers toward a buying decision.

Influencers

According to Syukur and Salsabila (as cited in Nurhidayati, 2025), influencers shape consumers' perceptions and influence online behavior through various forms of content, such as vlog videos and social media accounts. According to Zhang et al. (as cited in Yuniawaty & Istichanah, 2024), an influencer is an individual who uses social media, gains popularity through online activities, and is able to influence a large number of platform users. Influencers can increase the sales of a product or service by influencing target consumers through their behavior. According to Moumtaza (2022) (as cited in Putra & Adriyanto, 2025), an influencer is an individual on social media who is able to influence audience behavior and purchasing decisions through their expertise and influence.

An influencer is a figure on social media platforms with a substantial number of followers and significant influence, whose messages can shape and change the behavior of their followers (Violin et al., 2025). Influencers on social media are able to create trends and strengthen purchase intention through recommendations that appear authentic (Khaliza et al., 2025). Influencers have several indicators as follows: 1) Credibility, which reflects the level of consumer trust, including honesty and consistency in providing product reviews; 2) Attractiveness, which refers to the influencer's ability to capture attention through appearance, communication style, and personality; and 3) Expertise, which indicates the level of knowledge or experience an influencer has in a particular field, making their recommendations perceived as credible and competent.

Drawing from the explanations above, an influencer can be described as someone who shares testimonials, achieves public recognition, and holds the capacity to shape audience attitudes, behaviors, and buying decisions via the content, reviews, and messages they post. Influencers gain popularity through online activities and utilize their expertise, experience, and communication style to shape perceptions, create trends, and drive purchase intention in a more persuasive and authentic way on digital platforms.

Research on product quality and purchase intention conducted by (Sokolova & Kefi, 2019) shows that influencer credibility and interactions built through social media have a significant effect on consumers' purchase intention, mainly because influencers are able to create more personal and trusted relationships with their audience. Therefore, the hypothesis of this study states that influencers can act as a moderating variable that strengthens or weakens the relationship between product quality and product safety on consumers' purchase intention.

H3: Influencers Moderate the Effect of Product Quality on Purchase Intention

H4: Influencers Moderate the Effect of Product Safety on Purchase Intention

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study illustrates the relationship between the independent variables, namely Product Quality (X1) and Product Safety (X2), and the dependent variable, namely Purchase Intention (Y), which is moderated by Influencers (Z). based on the literature review that has been described, the framework of thinking can be formulated as follows:

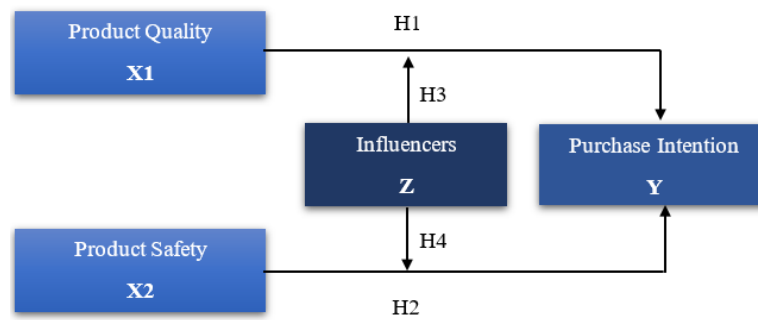


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Based Referring to Figure 1, the conceptual framework, this study puts forward hypotheses: Product Quality significantly affects Purchase Intention (H1), Product Safety significant affects Purchase Intention (H2), Influencers moderate the influence of Product Quality on Purchase Intention (H3), and Influencers moderate the influence of Product Safety on Purchase Intention (H4).

METHODS

This research adopts a quantitative method using an associative design. The quantitative approach was selected to investigate relationship and influences among variables through numerical data and statistical analysis. An associative design is employed to assess how product quality and product safety affect purchase intention for Wardah skincare, with influencers positioned as a moderating variable.

Data were gathered through a survey distributed via Google Forms questionnaires. The questionnaire was designed in the form of closed-ended statements using a five-point Likert scale, namely: strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5). Data analysis was conducted quantitatively using SmartPLS software, covering convergent validity, discriminant validity, reliability testing, structural model (inner model) evaluation, and simple slope analysis.

This study has four variables, namely product quality, product safety, influencers, and purchase intention. Product quality is measured using five indicators derived from (Tambunan et al. 2024; Aprilia et al. 2025; and Tamrin et al. 2025) namely performance, advantages, durability, conformity to specifications, and product packaging innovation. Product safety consists of four indicators developed from the study by Sitorus et al. (2021) namely product legality, product ingredients, clarity of product information, and risk of side effects. The moderating variable influencers includes three indicators adopted from (Violin et al. 2025 and Khaliza et al. 2025) namely credibility, attractiveness, and expertise. Purchase intention consists of three indicators developed from the study by Faris et al. (2025) namely interest, repurchase intention, and influencing others.

The target population comprises all Wardah skincare consumers, whose total number cannot be determined. Hence, non-probability sampling with a purposive technique was applied. Respondents were selected based on these criteria: male or female consumers who have used or currently use Wardah products, are familiar with Wardah promotions by influencers on social media, and are aged 17 years or older, up to 35 years.

Since the population size is undefined, the sample size was calculated using the (Lemeshow et al., 1997) formula. Applying a 95% confidence level, $P = 0.5$, and $d = 10\%$ margin of error, the sample size obtained is:

$$\text{Lemeshow et al. formula: } n = 1.96^2 \cdot 0.5 \cdot 0.5 / 0.10^2$$

$$n = 96.04$$

Based on the Lemeshow et al. formula, the result is 96.04; therefore, the total sample is rounded up to 100 respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Characteristics

Table 1. Respondent Characteristic

Characteristic	Answer	Percentage
Gender	Male	17%
	Female	83%
Age	<17 years	4%
	17-25 years	69%
	26-35 years	17%
	>35 years	10%
Occupation	Student	61%
	Private Employee	17%
	Entrepreneur	6%
	Civil Servant (ASN)	5%
	Teacher, Housewife, Trader, Farmer, Freelancer, and Contract Worker (Honorar)	11%
Have used Wardah skincare products	Yes	100%
	No	0%
Duration of using Wardah skincare products	<6 months	40%
	6 months – 1 year	16%
	>1 tahun	44%
Types of Wardah skincare products used	Facial Wash	41%
	Sunscreen	40%
	Moisturizer	10%
	Serum	5%
	Toner, BB tint, All of the	4%
Most frequently used social media for viewing skincare reviews and influencers	Tiktok	74%
	Instagram	21%
	Youtube, Television, and Shoope	5%

Outer Model Analysis

The research model depicted below illustrates that product quality (X1) and product safety (X2) exert a direct influence on purchase intention (Y). influencers (Z) function as a moderating variable capable of amplifying or diminishing these effects. Each construct is assessed through multiple indicators. The structural model for this study appears in the figure that follows:

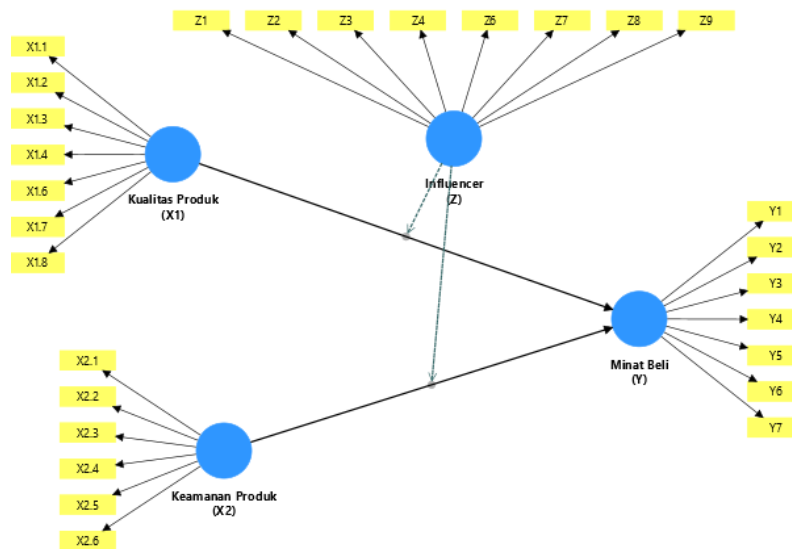


Figure 2. Outer Model

1. Convergent Validity Test

Outer Loading

Table 2. Outer Loading

	Influencers (Z)	Product Safety (X2)	Product Quality (X1)	Purchase Intention (Y)	Influencers (Z) x Product Quality (X1)	Influencers (Z) x Product Safety (X2)
X1.2			0.828			
X1.3			0.796			
X1.4			0.742			
X1.6			0.820			
X1.7			0.755			
X1.8			0.716			
X2.3		0.848				
X2.4		0.890				
X2.5		0.713				
X2.6		0.772				
Y3				0.868		
Y4				0.893		
Y6				0.819		
Y7				0.832		
Z4	0.806					
Z6	0.806					
Z7	0.840					
Z8	0.878					
Z9	0.835					
Z x X2						1.000
Z x X1					1.000	

Based on Table 2, it can be seen that all outer loading values of the indicators for Product Quality (X1), Product Safety (X2), Influencers (Z), and Purchase Intention (Y) are greater than 0.7. This indicates that the indicators are well-fitted in the model and can be used as construct parameters, meaning they are valid.

2. Discriminant Validity Test

1) HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations)

Table 3. HTMT

	Z	X2	X1	Y	Z x X2	Z x X1
Z						
X2	0.478					
X1	0.528	0.843				
Y	0.474	0.730	0.795			
Z x X2	0.243	0.364	0.160	0.107		
Z x X1	0.076	0.221	0.068	0.121	0.885	

Based on Table 3, using discriminant validity testing with the HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio) criterion, it can be concluded that discriminant validity is fulfilled because all inter-construct correlation values (such as 0.478; 0.528; 0.730; 0.795; and others) are below the threshold of 0.90 (and even below the stricter criterion of 0.85). This demonstrates that each construct-influencers (Z), Product Safety (X2), Product Quality (X1), and Purchase Intention (Y), is empirically distinct with no conceptual overlap. Hence, the model meets the requirements for subsequent analysis.

2) Fornell-Larcker

Table 4. Fornell-Larcker

	Influencers (Z)	Product Safety (X2)	Product Quality (X1)	Purchase Intention (Y)
Z	0.833			
X2	0.411	0.809		
X1	0.471	0.733	0.777	
Y	0.420	0.632	0.712	0.854

Based on Table 4, presents the Fornell-Larcker assessment of discriminant validity. The square root of the AVE for each construct is: Influencers (0.833), Product Safety (0.809), Product Quality (0.777), and Purchase Intention (0.854). since these values exceed the correlations between each construct and all other constructs, discriminant validity is confirmed.

3. Reliability Test

Table 5. Construct Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho-A	Composite reliability (rho-c)	AVE
Influencers (Z)	0.891	0.905	0.919	0.695
Product Safety (X2)	0.823	0.837	0.882	0.654
Product Quality (X1)	0.869	0.881	0.901	0.604
Purchase Intention (Y)	0.876	0.882	0.915	0.729

As shown in Table 5, all constructs satisfy the required thresholds: Cronbach's Alpha exceeds 0.7, rho-A is above 0.7, Composite Reliability (rho-c) surpasses 0.6, and AVE values are greater than the 0.5 minimum. Thus, all constructs in the model demonstrate adequate reliability and validity for further analysis.

Structural Model Test/Inner Model

1. R-Square

Table 6. R-Square

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Purchase Intention (Y)	0.552	0.528

Table 6 shows an Adjusted R-Square of 0.528 for the model. This indicates that 52.8% of the variance in Purchase Intention (Y) is explained by the exogenous constructs, which falls into the moderate category. Product Quality, Product Safety, and Influencers together account for 52.8% of Purchase Intention, whereas the remaining 47.2% is attributed to other factors outside the scope of this research.

2. Hypothesis Testing

Table 7. Path Coefficients (Bootstrapping)

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Z → Y	0.026	0.073	0.113	0.229	0.819
Z*X2 → Y	0.090	0.099	0.140	0.645	0.519
Z*X1 → Y	-0.020	-0.032	0.157	0.130	0.897
X2 → Y	0.299	0.283	0.130	2.301	0.021
X1 → Y	0.504	0.509	0.111	4.528	0.000

The bootstrapping output in Table 7 reveals that Product Quality (X1) yields a P-value of 0.000 (< 0.05) and a T-statistic of 4.528 (> 1.96), confirming a significant positive influence on Purchase Intention. Thus, Hypothesis 1 is accepted. Then, Product Safety (X2) produces a P-value of 0.021 (< 0.05) and a T-statistic of 2.301 (> 1.96), demonstrating a significant positive impact on Purchase Intention. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 is accepted. For the moderating effects, the interaction of Product Quality (X1) and Influencers (Z) on Purchase Intention (Y) shows a P-value of 0.897 (> 0.05) and a T-statistic of 0.130 (< 1.96). This suggests that Influencers do not significantly moderate the link between Product Quality and Purchase Intention, so Hypothesis 3 is rejected. Similarly, the interaction of Product Safety (X2) and Influencers (Z) on Purchase Intention (Y) shows a P-value of 0.519 (> 0.05) and a T-statistic of 0.645 (< 1.96), indicating that Influencers are unable to moderate (strengthen or weaken) the relationship between Product Safety and Purchase Intention. Therefore, Hypothesis 4 is rejected.

Simple Slope Analysis

1. Influencers (Z) x Product Safety (X2)

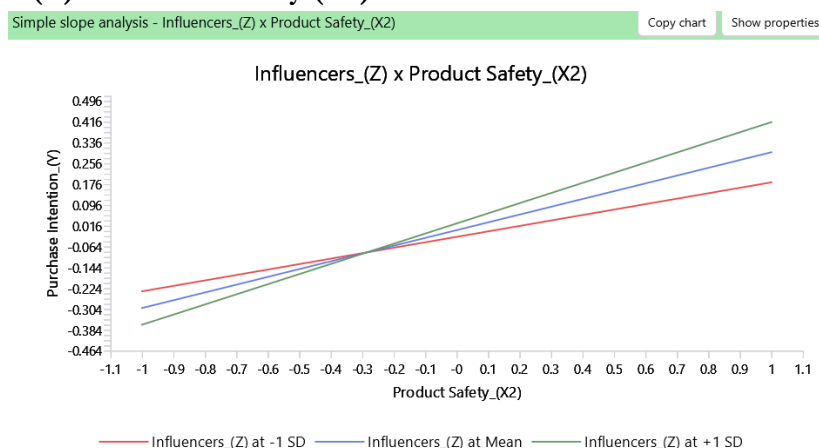


Figure 3. Simple Slope Graph Influencers (Z) x Product Safety (X2)

Based on Figure 3, the graph shows that the three lines (red, blue, and green) are closely clustered and have almost identical slopes. This indicates that the role of Influencers (Z) at high (+1 SD), average (mean), and low (−1 SD) levels does not produce any meaningful difference in effect. In addition, the three lines intersect the axis at nearly the same point, indicating that Influencers do not change the strength of the relationship between Product Safety (X2) and Purchase Intention (Y). Overall, it can be concluded that the Influencer variable does not significantly moderate the relationship between Product Safety and Purchase Intention.

2. Influencers (Z) x Product Quality (X1)

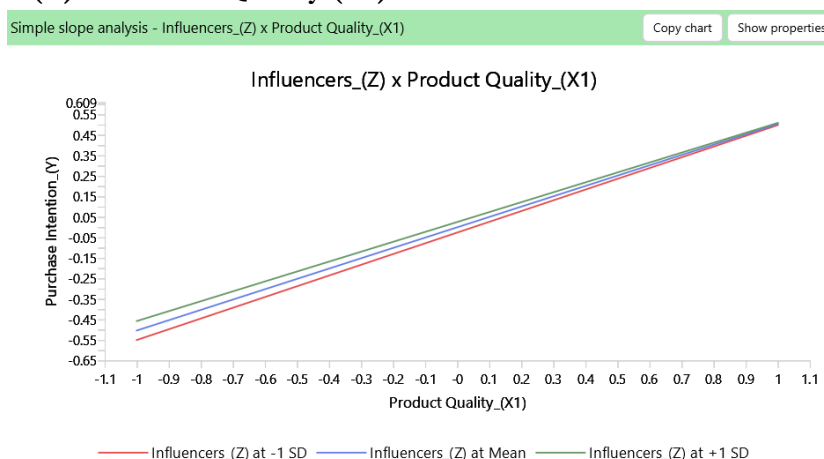


Figure 4. Simple Slope Graph Influencers (Z) x Product Quality (X1)

Based on Figure 4, the graph shows that the three lines (Influencer −1 SD, mean, and +1 SD) almost overlap into a single line, which is the strongest visual indication that there is no moderating effect. Since the three lines have identical slopes, it means that the effect of Product Quality (X1) on Purchase Intention (Y) remains the same regardless of whether the influencer's role is high, moderate, or low. Overall, it can be concluded that Influencers do not function as a moderating variable. Meanwhile, Product Quality has a consistently positive effect on Purchase Intention, and the strength of this effect does not depend on the presence or absence of an Influencer.

DISCUSSION

1. The Effect of Product Quality on Purchase Intention

Hypothesis testing indicates that product quality exerts a positive and significant influence on consumers' purchase intention. Thus, stronger perceptions of Wardah's product quality correspond to greater purchase intention among consumers. This outcome aligns with Tambunan et al. (2024), who established product quality as a primary driver of consumer satisfaction, as superior products foster favorable experiences. This finding is further reinforced by Aprilia et al. (2025), who state that a positive perception of product quality directly increases consumers' trust in the brand. Quality serves as a key signal that reduces uncertainty and perceived risk, making it a dominant determinant of consumers' purchase intention.

2. The Effect of Product Safety on Purchase Intention

The results confirm that product safety significantly affects consumers' purchase intention, suggesting that safety considerations are central to Wardah skincare buying decisions. To minimize risk, consumers prefer products that are demonstrably safe and legally compliant. This aligns with Sitorus et al. (2021), who highlighted that perceived safety and legality strongly determine purchase intention in cosmetics. When these safety aspects are fulfilled, consumers' doubts about purchasing are reduced, thereby significantly increasing purchase intention. Thus, in the skincare product category, safety is not an added value but a basic requirement that must be met before consumers consider other variables.

3. Influencers Moderate the Effect of Product Quality on Purchase Intention

Hypothesis testing reveals that influencers do not significantly moderate the relationship between product quality and purchase intention (H3 is rejected). This implies that regardless of how convincingly influencers endorse skincare quality, they neither amplify nor diminish the link between perceived quality and purchase intention. This contrasts with Sokolova and Kefi (2019), who reported that influencers substantially affect purchase intention by fostering trusted audience connections. On the contrary, this study's findings are consistent with (Johansen & Guldvik, 2017) who state that influencer marketing is not superior to conventional web advertising and does not have a direct impact on consumers' purchase intention. Thus, the role of influencers is not as a strengthening factor in the relationship between product quality and consumers' purchasing decisions.

4. Influencers Moderate the Effect of Product Safety on Purchase Intention

The analysis shows that influencers fail to moderate the influence of product safety on purchase intention (H4 is rejected). This confirms that in aspects of safety related to skin health risks, the role of influencers becomes very weak and is unable to strengthen consumers' confidence. The result is consistent with (Elmoussa et al., 2022), who noted that heightened consumer skepticism toward risky products like skincare diminishes influencer impact. Alrwashdeh et al. (as cited in Adaba et al., 2025) also highlight the existence of a trust paradox, where high trust in commercial social media influencers (SMIs) can actually reduce purchase intention and only explains about 2.1% of actual purchasing behavior. Therefore, product safety communication strategies will be more effective if they focus on data transparency and official certifications rather than relying on influencer figures.

CONCLUSION

The research findings conclude that product quality and product safety positively and significantly affect consumers' purchase intention for Wardah skincare. This confirms that skincare consumers primarily emphasize functional performance and safety when making purchase decisions. Conversely, the study shows that influencers cannot operate as a moderating variable. This finding provides empirical contribution by showing that the effectiveness of influencers is not always universal, especially for products that involve usage risks such as skincare. This indicates

a shift in consumer behavior toward being more rational and selective, so they do not fully rely on external recommendations.

Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. First, this study uses a limited sample size and a purposive sampling technique, so the generalization of the findings should be made with caution. Second, the variables used are limited to product quality, product safety, and influencers, so they do not fully represent all factors that may influence purchase intention. Third, the cross-sectional design cannot capture temporal changes in consumer behavior.

In general, this study contributes to the development of marketing knowledge by emphasizing that in the skincare industry, internal product factors are more dominant than external factors in influencing purchase intention, while also providing a new perspective on the limitations of influencers as a moderating variable.

IMPLICATIONS

1. Theoretical Implications

The results of this study contribute to the development of consumer behavior research, particularly in understanding the factors that influence purchase intention in skincare products. The findings show that product quality has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention, consistent with studies by Tambunan et al. (2024) and Aprilia et al. (2025), which state that product quality enhances consumer satisfaction and trust. In addition, product safety has also been proven to have a significant effect on purchase intention, supported by the study of Sitorus et al. (2021), which emphasizes that safety aspects are a primary consideration for consumers in purchasing decisions. Nevertheless, influencers cannot moderate the relationships between product quality or product safety and purchase intention, implying that skincare consumers depend more on direct assessment of product attributes than on external influences.

2. Practical Implications

a. For Wardah Company

The findings reveal that product quality is the primary driver of consumers' purchase intention. Companies need to continuously maintain and improve product quality, such as the effectiveness of formulations, active ingredient content, and product innovations that align with consumer needs. Product safety also demonstrates a significant impact, so the company must guarantee compliance with standards, secure BPOM certification and usage instructions. On the other hand, although influencers are not proven to act as a moderating variable, companies can still utilize influencers as a marketing communication tool to introduce products to consumers.

b. For Marketing Practitioners

This study illustrates that successful marketing strategies for skincare hinges not just on influencer involvement, but more critically on fostering consumer trust via superior product quality and product safety.

c. For Consumers

This study provides consumers with an understanding that in choosing skincare products, quality and safety are the most important factors to consider.

3. Methodological Implications

This study applied Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) via SmartPLS to test direct and moderating effects. The results confirm that PLS-SEM effectively captures complex relationships in consumer behavior models, particularly when influencers moderate the links between product attributes and purchase intention. For

future research, testing alternative moderators such as brand trust or brand image can provide deeper insights into how digital cues shape skincare purchase decisions.

SUGGESTIONS

1. For Wardah

Wardah should strengthen product quality and safety as core differentiators, given their proven impact on purchase intention. Key actions include enhancing product effectiveness, ensuring safe ingredients, and maintaining transparent information such as BPOM certification. Although influencers did not moderate the relationships in this study, Wardah can still shift influencer content from hard-selling to informative content about formulation and safety to build trust.

2. For Future Researchers

- a. Expand the model. Integrate price, brand image, consumer trust, and perceived risk to better explain purchase intention in skincare.
- b. Improve generalizability. Use probability sampling with larger, more diverse samples across regions.
- c. Capture dynamics. Apply longitudinal designs to observe how consumer behavior changes amid evolving digital marketing and skincare trends.

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