

## The Effect Of Halal Labels, Brand Image, And Product Quality On The Decision To Purchase Skintific Products With *Word Of Mouth* As A Moderating Variable (Study on Muslim Adolescents in Palu City)

Devi Novianty<sup>1</sup>, Amiruddin Kadir<sup>2</sup>, Sudirman<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup> Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar, Makassar, Indonesia

Email: [devinovianty148@gmail.com](mailto:devinovianty148@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [amiruddin@uin-alauddin.ac.id](mailto:amiruddin@uin-alauddin.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>, [sudirman.andi@uin-alauddin.ac.id](mailto:sudirman.andi@uin-alauddin.ac.id)<sup>3</sup>

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### ***Abstract***

#### **Keywords:**

Halal Label, Brand Image, Product Quality, Word of Mouth, Purchasing Decision

*This study aims to analyze the influence of halal labels, brand image, and product quality on purchasing decisions for Skintific cosmetic products, as well as to evaluate the role of word of mouth in moderating the relationship between research variables among Muslim adolescents in Palu City. This study is motivated by the increasing demand for halal cosmetics by Muslim consumers and the phenomenon of digital marketing that shapes purchasing decision-making patterns through social influence and opinions on social media. The study used a quantitative method with the Structural Equation Modeling – Partial Least Square (SEM–PLS) analysis technique, and involved 200 respondents selected through purposive sampling. The results showed that halal labels, brand image, and product quality had a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. Word of mouth was proven to moderate all relationships, but with different dynamics: negative moderation of the relationship between halal labels and purchasing decisions, and positive moderation of brand image and product quality. This study provides academic and practical contributions in cosmetic marketing strategies for the Muslim adolescent consumer segment.*

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## INTRODUCTION

The cosmetics industry in Indonesia has experienced rapid growth over the past two decades. Industry growth data shows that demand for beauty products comes not only from adult women but also from men and teenagers who are actively participating in self-care practices. This lifestyle transformation is driving cosmetics companies to develop increasingly competitive marketing strategies that adapt to changing consumer consumption patterns. Indonesia, with the world's largest Muslim population, is a strategic market for the halal cosmetics industry because the majority of consumers adhere to sharia principles in selecting safe and Islamic-compliant products.

The halal label is a key element in shaping consumer trust in cosmetic products. Cosmetic products often contain animal-derived ingredients or undergo critical production processes, requiring Muslim consumers to ensure the products they use truly comply with halal requirements. Therefore, halal certification is a crucial factor in the evaluation and purchasing decision-making process in the Muslim consumer market. However, in the teenage consumer segment, cosmetic purchasing decisions are shaped not only by religious considerations but also by beauty trends, consumer reviews, influencers, and digital culture.

Skintific is a cosmetics brand experiencing rapid growth in Indonesia through marketing predominantly based on digital platforms and consumer reviews. Various Skintific products, particularly the skincare range, have become extremely popular among teenagers and are known

for their strong brand image and high quality. At the same time, the manufacturer has integrated halal certification as a response to the Muslim consumer market. However, consumer behavior shows that acceptance of Skintific products is not solely dependent on the halal label, but is also heavily influenced by brand perceptions and product quality, as well as word of mouth dynamics in digital media.

Word of mouth (WOM) is emerging as a primary source of information for Generation Z and teenage consumers. Compared to conventional advertising, teenagers place greater trust in the experiences of other users on social media, reviews from beauty content creators, and recommendations from peers. This has the potential to strengthen or weaken the influence of product attributes such as halal labels, brand image, and product quality on purchasing decisions. Based on this phenomenon, this study was conducted to examine the complex interactions between halal labels, brand image, product quality, and word of mouth moderating their influence on purchasing decisions for Skintific products among Muslim teenagers in Palu City.

## **METHODS**

This study employed a quantitative approach with Structural Equation Modeling – Partial Least Squares (SEM–PLS) analysis. The study population comprised Muslim adolescents in Palu City who had purchased Skintific products, while a sample of 200 respondents was obtained through purposive sampling. The research instrument was a five-level Likert-scale questionnaire measuring halal labeling, brand image, product quality, word of mouth, and purchasing decisions.

The outer model test showed that all variable indicators had loading factor values  $> 0.70$ , Average Variance Extracted (AVE)  $> 0.50$ , and Composite Reliability  $> 0.90$ , indicating validity and reliability. The inner model test showed an adjusted R-square value of 0.971, indicating that the halal label, brand image, product quality, and word of mouth variables can explain purchasing decisions with very high power. Bootstrapping analysis was used to test the direct and moderating effects of WOM on the relationship between variables.

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## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The analysis results show that the halal label has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions. Muslim consumers consider halal certification as an indicator of safety and confidence in product use. Brand image also has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions, indicating that Skintific's reputation as a high-quality and popular product provides a strong psychological stimulus for consumers. Furthermore, product quality has been shown to significantly influence purchasing decisions, primarily because consumers experience direct benefits from using skincare products over a period of time.

Word of mouth was shown to moderate all relationships between variables. Moderation of WOM on the relationship between halal labels and purchasing decisions was negative, indicating that the influence of halal labels weakened when consumers were more exposed to digital social opinions related to beauty trends than halal issues. However, moderation of WOM on the relationship between brand image and product quality was positive, indicating that purchase intentions increased when consumers received reviews and recommendations that supported brand image and product performance excellence.

## DISCUSSION

The finding that halal labels positively influence purchasing decisions confirms that religious values remain highly important to Muslim consumers, even among adolescents who are more adaptable to modernization. However, the finding of negative WOM moderation towards halal labels demonstrates that adolescents tend to prioritize trend narratives and user experiences over normative halal certification. This dynamic demonstrates a shift in purchasing decision-making mechanisms from traditional, faith-based consumption patterns to modern consumption patterns based on digital social validation.

A brand image that positively influences purchasing decisions indicates that consumers are not only consuming the product but also consuming the brand identity. Skintific projects an image as a modern, high-quality skincare technology product relevant to the needs of teenage skin. When this image is reinforced by positive WOM, consumer perceptions are further strengthened. A similar trend is observed for product quality, which is the most important determinant of repeat purchases. WOM strengthens consumers' evaluation of product benefits through social engagement in the form of recommendations, reviews, ratings, and testimonial posts.

These combined results indicate that teenage consumers' purchasing orientations are influenced by three dimensions: religious (inner peace of mind from halal), psychological (brand trust), and functional (product effectiveness). However, in the context of a digital lifestyle, the social dimension (WOM) becomes the primary lever that strengthens or weakens the dominance of these three factors. Therefore, the consumption model of Muslim teenagers is multi-behavioral, unlike adult consumers, who tend to be more stable in their religious values.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the purchasing decisions of Skintific products among Muslim adolescents in Palu City are positively and significantly influenced by three main factors: the halal label, brand image, and product quality. Consumer perceptions of the authenticity and credibility of the halal label have been shown to build trust and encourage purchase intentions. A strong brand image also contributes to building confidence, positive impressions, and consumer loyalty towards the product. In addition, product quality is the most dominant factor in influencing purchasing decisions because it is directly related to the product's performance, safety, and effectiveness perceived by consumers. Word of mouth has been shown to moderate these three relationships, but with different characteristics. WOM weakens the influence of the halal label on purchasing decisions, but strengthens the influence of brand image and product quality on purchasing decisions, so that social recommendations become important validation for consumers before deciding to purchase. Overall, the research results indicate that the combination of halal certification, brand image, product quality, and word of mouth dynamics in consumers' social environment is key in the marketing strategy of halal cosmetic products, especially in increasing Skintific's competitiveness in the Indonesian skincare market.

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