

The Influence of Brand Image and Product Quality on Purchasing Decisions for Avoskin Skincare Products Mediated by Consumer Trust in Ternate City

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the effects of brand image and product quality on the purchasing decisions of Avoskin skincare products, with consumer trust as the mediating variable. This research employs a quantitative, survey-based approach. The sample consists of 126 respondents who are consumers of Avoskin skincare products in Ternate City, selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected through questionnaires using a five-point Likert scale and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). The results indicate that brand image and product quality have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. Brand image and product quality also have a positive and significant effect on consumer trust. Consumer trust has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. Furthermore, consumer trust does not mediate the effect of brand image on purchasing decisions but partially mediates the effect of product quality on purchasing decisions.

Keywords:

Brand Image; Product Quality; Consumer Trust; Purchasing Decision

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of the global skincare industry has intensified competition among brands, particularly in emerging markets such as Indonesia. Increasing consumer awareness of skin health, product safety, and sustainability has encouraged the growth of local skincare brands that position themselves through distinctive brand values and superior product quality. This dynamic environment requires firms to understand the increasingly complex and multidimensional key determinants of consumer purchase decisions.

In the skincare sector, purchase decisions are not determined solely by functional attributes, but also by consumers' psychological evaluations, including brand image and trust. Brand image represents a set of perceptions, beliefs, and associations held by consumers toward a particular brand. Kotler and Keller (2016) argue that brand image serves as a cognitive shortcut, enabling consumers to differentiate products and reduce decision-making uncertainty. A strong, positive brand image functions as a strategic asset because it lowers perceived risk and simplifies consumer evaluation.

Product quality remains a fundamental determinant of purchasing behavior, especially for skincare products that involve high personal involvement and perceived risk. Kotler and Armstrong (2018) define product quality as a product's ability to perform its functions reliably and to meet or exceed customer expectations. In skincare products, quality is evaluated through attributes such as safety, effectiveness, formulation, durability, and design. Empirical evidence supports the positive influence

of product quality on purchase decisions (Yulianto & Prabowo, 2024; Setiyana & Widyasari, 2019). However, other studies report insignificant relationships between product quality and purchase decisions (Fadillah, 2023), suggesting that quality alone may not be sufficient to stimulate purchasing behavior without consumers' confidence in the brand.

Consumer trust plays a critical role in translating marketing stimuli into behavioral responses. Trust reflects consumers' beliefs in a brand's reliability, integrity, and ability to deliver on its promises. Drawing on the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) framework, brand image and product quality act as external stimuli, while trust represents an internal psychological state that shapes behavioral responses such as purchase decisions. In highly competitive markets, trust can either strengthen or weaken the influence of brand image and product quality on consumer behavior.

Nevertheless, prior empirical findings regarding the mediating role of consumer trust remain inconsistent. Several studies confirm that trust significantly mediates the relationship between brand image and purchase decisions (Solihah et al., 2024; Aurellia & Sidharta, 2023), as well as between product quality and purchase decisions (Fatmawati et al., 2017). Conversely, other studies indicate that trust does not always function as an effective mediator, particularly in contexts where consumers rely more on brand familiarity and past experience than on psychological confidence. These inconsistencies suggest the need for further investigation into the contextual conditions under which trust operates as a mediator.

The purchase decision process is the way consumers recognize needs, search for information, evaluate alternatives, and finally choose a product. Kotler and Keller (2012) conceptualize purchase decision as a behavioral outcome influenced by both rational assessment and psychological factors. In the skincare context, this process involves higher levels of involvement due to perceived risks related to product safety, effectiveness, and suitability for individual skin conditions. Kalangi et al. (2019) identify indicators of purchase decisions, including brand choice, purchase timing, purchase quantity, and channel selection.

Research Model

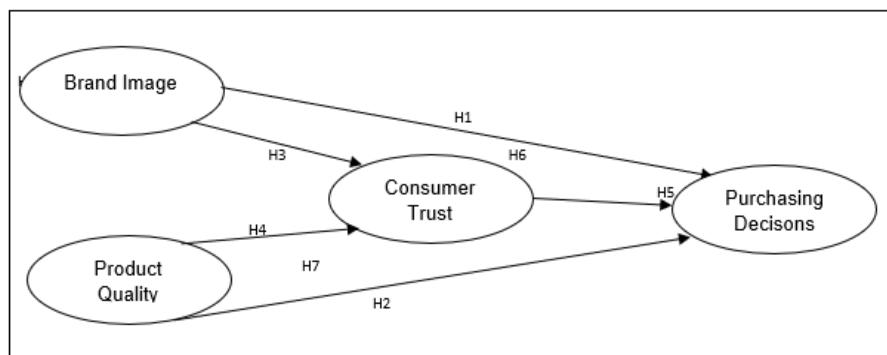


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Although studies on brand image, product quality, and purchase decisions are abundant, integrated models that simultaneously examine these variables with consumer trust as a mediating construct remain limited. Moreover, most previous research has focused on large metropolitan areas or national samples, leaving regional markets relatively underexplored. This limitation is particularly relevant for

local skincare brands such as Avoskin, where consumer perceptions and trust formation may differ across regions.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the effects of brand image and product quality on purchase decisions with consumer trust as a mediating variable in the context of Avoskin skincare products. Theoretically, this research contributes to the consumer behavior and marketing literature by clarifying the mediating role of trust in the relationship between brand image, product quality, and purchase decisions. In practice, the findings offer managerial insights for skincare companies on developing branding and product strategies that emphasize trust-building mechanisms to enhance consumer purchase decisions in regional markets.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research design to examine the effects of brand image and product quality on purchase decisions, with consumer trust as a mediating variable. The population of this study consisted of consumers who have purchased and used Avoskin skincare products in Ternate City, Indonesia. A total of 126 respondents were selected using purposive sampling, with the following criteria: having purchased Avoskin products at least once and having prior experience with the products.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed from measurement items validated in previous studies to ensure construct validity. Reliability testing was conducted to confirm internal consistency. The variables of brand image, product quality, consumer trust, and purchase decisions were measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

To test the proposed hypotheses, the data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS software. This method enabled the examination of both the direct effects of brand image and product quality on purchase decisions and the indirect effects through consumer trust as a mediating variable. The mediation analysis was conducted using the bootstrapping procedure by evaluating the significance of indirect effects. All statistical decisions were made at a significance level of 0.07.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Descriptive Analysis of Variables

The descriptive results show that respondents' perceptions of all research variables fall into the high category. Brand image received a mean score of 4.42 (very high), indicating that consumers perceive Avoskin as a skincare brand with a positive reputation, strong identity, and favorable brand associations. Product quality recorded a mean score of 4.26 (high), indicating positive consumer perceptions of Avoskin's product performance. Consumer trust recorded a mean score of 4.29 (high), indicating strong consumer confidence in the reliability and credibility of Avoskin skincare products. Meanwhile, Purchasing decision variable had a mean score of 4.34 (high), indicating a strong interest in purchasing and repurchasing Avoskin skincare products.

2. Evaluation of the Measurement Model (Outer Model)

The measurement model demonstrates adequate reliability and validity. All indicators meet the convergent validity requirement with factor loadings greater than 0.70. Discriminant validity is supported, as each indicator shows higher cross-

loadings on its respective construct. Internal consistency reliability is confirmed by Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values above 0.70, while AVE values exceed 0.50. These results indicate that the constructs used in this study are statistically valid and reliable.

3. Evaluation of the Structural Model (Inner Model)

The structural model shows that the R-square for purchase decisions is 0.589, indicating that 58.9% of the variance in purchase decisions is explained by brand image, product quality, and consumer trust. Meanwhile, the R-square value for consumer trust is 0.552, meaning that 55.2% of its variance is explained by brand image and product quality. Both values indicate moderate predictive accuracy of the structural model.

Table 1. Path Coefficient

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Brand image -> Consumer trust	0.230	0.230	0.087	2.649	0.008
Brand image -> Purchasing decision	0.408	0.393	0.140	2.905	0.004
Consumer trust -> Purchasing decision	0.257	0.269	0.118	2.176	0.030
Product quality -> Consumer trust	0.562	0.566	0.080	7.018	0.000
Product quality -> Purchasing decision	0.197	0.185	0.122	1.613	0.107

The structural model analysis shows that brand image has a positive and significant effect on consumer trust, with a path coefficient of 0.230 and a significance value of 0.008 (< 0.05). This result indicates that a stronger brand image directly leads to higher levels of consumer trust. Furthermore, brand image also exerts a strong, positive, and significant influence on purchasing decision, as reflected by a path coefficient of 0.408 and a significance value of 0.004 (< 0.05). This finding demonstrates that a strong brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions for Avoskin skincare products. Consumer trust has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decision, with a path coefficient of 0.257 and a significance value of 0.030 (< 0.05). This finding demonstrates that consumer trust has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions for Avoskin skincare products. Product quality as a positive and significant effect on consumer trust, with a path coefficient of 0.562 and a significance value of 0.000 (< 0.05). This finding demonstrates that product quality has a positive and significant effect on consumer trust in Avoskin skincare products. In addition product quality

Table 2. Specific Indirect Effect

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Brand image -> Consumer trust -> purchasing decision	0.059	0.062	0.038	1.553	0.120
Product quality -> Consumer trust -> purchasing decision	0.144	0.151	0.067	2.154	0.031

The mediation test further shows that brand image The mediation test indicates that consumer trust does not mediate the relationship between brand image and purchase decisions, as the indirect effect is not statistically significant (t-statistic = 1.553; p-value = 0.120). Furthermore, the VAF of 11.2% falls below the minimum threshold for mediation, indicating that consumer trust does not mediate this relationship.

Discussion

The findings confirm these findings confirm that brand image has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions. This indicates that the stronger a company's brand image, the more likely consumers are to choose and purchase its products. This aligns with (Kotler & Keller, 2016) That brand image is a name, sign, term, design, symbol, or combination of these things, which has a meaning to identify goods or services from a person or group of sellers and to differentiate them from their products and competitors' products. The result also supports the SOR theory (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974), explaining how external stimuli from brand image can influence consumers' internal processes (perception and attitude), ultimately driving them to make purchasing decisions. These findings are consistent with previous studies Lia et al., (2021) ; Tia & Ambardi (2023) which states that brand image significantly influences purchasing decisions.

The findings also reveal that product quality positively and significantly influences purchasing decisions. This indicates that consumers are more likely to purchase Avoskin products when they perceive the products as effective, reliable, and suitable for their skin needs. Product attributes such as ingredient safety, product performance, and consistency of results play a decisive role in influencing consumer choices. This result aligns with the studies of Yulianto and Prabowo (2024), Setiyana and Widayasari (2019), and Sugiharto and Darmawan (2021), which emphasize that high product quality strengthens consumers' intention and decision to purchase. However, the result differs from Fadillah (2023), who found that product quality did not significantly affect purchasing decisions. In the context of Avoskin, the growing awareness of skincare ingredients and skin health among consumers in Ternate may explain why product quality emerges as a dominant factor in purchase decisions.

The study demonstrates that brand image positively and significantly affects consumer trust. A strong brand image signals credibility, reliability, and integrity, which increases consumers' trust in the brand. Avoskin's consistent branding, awards, and ethical positioning appear to strengthen consumers' belief in the brand's trustworthiness and ability to deliver promised benefits. This finding supports previous research by Hendrayani and Seminari (2017), which found that brand image significantly enhances consumer trust. Within the S-O-R framework, brand image

serves as a stimulus that shapes consumers' cognitive and affective evaluations, leading to higher trust levels.

Product quality is also found to have a positive and significant effect on consumer trust. When consumers experience consistent product performance and perceive the products as safe and effective, their trust in the brand increases. This indicates that trust is not only built through symbolic aspects of the brand but also through direct product experience. This result is consistent with Yusra and Rizki (2021), who found that higher perceived product quality leads to stronger consumer trust. In skincare products, where long-term use and skin compatibility are critical, product quality is a key determinant of sustained trust.

The findings confirm that consumer trust has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. Consumers who trust Avoskin are more confident in making purchase decisions and are less likely to perceive risk associated with product usage. Trust reduces uncertainty and strengthens consumers' commitment to the brand. This finding aligns with Chinomona (2016) and Liusito et al. (2020), who emphasized trust as a fundamental factor in purchase decisions, particularly in markets characterized by high product involvement, such as skincare.

Interestingly, the study reveals that consumer trust does not mediate the relationship between brand image and purchasing decisions. This suggests that brand image directly influences purchasing decisions, without necessarily passing through consumer trust. In other words, a positive brand image alone is sufficient to encourage consumers to purchase Avoskin products, even when trust has not fully developed. This finding implies that brand image may function as a heuristic cue, allowing consumers to make quick decisions based on overall perceptions rather than deeper trust-based evaluations. In contrast, consumer trust partially mediates the relationship between product quality and purchasing decisions. This indicates that product quality influences purchasing decisions both directly and indirectly through trust. High product quality enhances trust, thereby strengthening consumers' intention to purchase. This partial mediation highlights the importance of experiential factors in skincare consumption, where repeated product use and perceived effectiveness gradually build trust that reinforces purchasing behavior.

CONCLUSION

This study examines the effects of brand image and product quality on purchase decisions, with consumer trust as a mediating variable, in the context of Avoskin skincare products in Ternate City. The results show that brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions, while product quality significantly influences consumer trust, which in turn positively affects purchase decisions. The mediation analysis indicates that consumer trust does not mediate the relationship between brand image and purchase decisions **but** partially mediates the relationship between product quality and purchase decisions. These findings highlight the importance of strengthening product quality to build consumer trust, while maintaining a strong brand image to directly encourage purchasing behavior.

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