# Do Males Share the Same Criteria as Females in Determining their Skincare Needs? A study of Consumers' Behavior

# Aisyah Khoerunnisa Nurjamin and Maya Ariyanti

Faculty of Economics and Business
Telkom University, Indonesia
aisyahkhnurjam@student.telkomuniversity.ac.id, ariyanti@telkomuniversity.ac.id

### Abstract

Beauty and femininity are the main selling points of the cosmetic industry centering on women. However, due to the Covid 19 pandemic, the demand for man cosmetic products significantly increases. Thus, this study intends to identify the behaviors of male consumers towards the interest in buying skincare products. To address the issue, the present study deployed a quantitative method embracing SEM using LISREL application. Through this framework, the study which involved 381 Kahf's Instagram followers as the sample analyzed the consumer's behaviors under which eleven hypotheses were broken down and examined. The results showed that perceived value, brand image, religious belief, halal certification, trust, and attitude affect men's purchasing behaviors. In contrast to these seven factors, the religious belief aspect has the lower effect on the consumer's halal awareness. Of these three mediator variables, attitude is found to be the main driving factor. The findings signify that brand image, religious belief, trust and halal awareness built in consumers are reflected in their attitude. Further research is expected to analyze the role of women, the main target of the skincare market, towards the men's preference in purchasing skincare products.

# Keywords

Marketing, Consumer Behavior, Purchase Intention, Men's Skincare.

# 1. Introduction

Beauty products have been acknowledged as the most selling points within the cosmetic industry. Although they are originally designed for women, the products have recently attracted the attention of men encouraging the high demand for the men's cosmetic care. The results of a survey done by Yuen et al. (2018) bears justification to the claim that 64.4% of men pay attention to their skin condition. The data shows a change in perspective in which more men become more aware of and concerned about the importance of appearance (Sanny et al. 2020). In addition, the increase in the percentage of men's skin care products in western countries is predicted to have an effect on the new demand for these products in developing countries (Khan et al. 2016). It is in line with the conclusion of the Euromonitor 2021 survey which indicates that the awareness of self-care and beauty care in men in Indonesia will continue to grow. This is evident in the increasing number of purchases of men's care products such as soap and other toiletries. Reported in the Jakartapost.com, the demand for the beauty and personal care products in Indonesia has soared with a fantastic increase in online sales turnover since the enactment of Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) by the government in June 2020.

The surge in demand for the cosmetic products described above has encouraged competition among skin care product companies in Indonesia, especially in this digital age. It is parallel to Chaffey and Chadwick's (2016) statements stating that, in the digital age, the threat of product replacement has become an inevitable issue considering the benefits of technology which allows products to be easily introduced and expanded. This situation certainly affects the buying process undergone by the consumers putting an urgency to the company to take all this issue into account to maintain costumer's trust and satisfaction. The company, for instance, may involve social media to engage and interact with the costumers, especially the millennial ones which eventually may affect the online buying activity (Dabbous and Barakat 2020).

The target of increasing buying interest using such marketing strategies cannot be separated from the important concept of buying interest or purchase intention. Buying interest is considered to be very crucial because it serves as the first trigger that can generate consumer's interest to make a purchase. As stated by Howard (1994) in (Pandjaitan 2018), this factor is something associated with the consumer's plan to buy a particular product and how many units of product are needed in a certain period of time. To achieve excellence in generating costumer's interest, companies are required to undertake various things so as not to lose the buying interest of the consumers, including taking into consideration several aspects such as the perceived value, brand image, religious belief, halal certification, trust, attitude, and halal awareness.

Numerous studies related to buying interest have been widely conducted. Among others was undertaken by Sanny et al. (2020) who found that men's buying interest in skin care products is influenced by social media marketing mediated by Brand Image and Brand Trust. Similar topics were also investigated in Handriana's et al. (2020) study which showed that Perceived Value, Brand Image, Religious Belief, Halal Certification, Trust, Attitude and Halal Awareness affect women's buying interest in skin care products. Furthermore, Lee et al. (2019) discovered that customers' buying interest in skin care products is influenced by Brand awareness, Brand association, Perceived quality and Brand loyalty. Meanwhile, Divianjella et al. (2020) suggested that costumers' buying interest in skin care products is influenced by Religious Belief, as well as customers' attitudes towards the brand. Moreover, Khan et al. (2020) that halal logos are a very important predictor of interest in buying halal skin care products.

Although those previous studies have revealed various factors affecting purchase intention, the subjects remain focused on women. Investigations that focus on discovering the factors that may affect men's buying interest, to the research best knowledge, are still limited.

# 1.1 Objectives

The present study seeks to investigate the contributing factors toward men's purchase interest in skincare product. Practically, the result of this research can be used by companies as the references of marketing strategy or marketing communication.

### 2. Literature Review

This part focuses on the customers' behaviors including perceived value, brand image, religious belief, halal certification, trust, attitude and halal awareness.

The first aspect is the perceived value which refers to a consumer's whole evaluation of the net benefits of a product or service (Bolton and Drew 1991; Patterson andSpreng1997). The value received by the customers is important because it can increase consumer's buying interest (Steenkamp and Geyskens 2006; in Chen and Chang 2012). Perceived value is not only determinant in maintaining the customers' loyalty, but also plays an important role in influencing costumer's buying interest (Zeithaml 1988; Zhuan et al. 2010; Chen and Chang 2012).

The second aspect is brand image which includes symbolic meanings that the consumers associate with a particular product or service (Padgett and Allen 1997). The function of brand image is to define products for consumers and differentiate companies among competitors (Padgett and Allen 1997). Brand image may hook the customers to specific offerings which eventually may drive them to act on a particular product or service (Keller 1993). In relation to this, research conducted by Chinomona (2016) and Chen (2010) indicated that brand image affects consumer's confidence or trust. Such confidence or trust, which is based on a good brand image established by the company, will further encourage consumer's buying interest. Therefore, the present study proposes a hypothesis that Brand image influences the costumer's trust.

The third aspect is religious belief which is defined as somebody's faithfulness to his or her spiritual beliefs, values, and practices (Worthington et al. 2003). Religious beliefs are indicated as the prominent aspect based on the model pioneered by (Hunt and Vitell 2006). In this model, religious belief is claimed to positively influence the consumer's ethical beliefs. This signifies that those with higher religiosity tend to be more principled in their notion. Research conducted by Yasid et al. (2016); Aksoy and Abdulfatai (2018); Tuhin et al. (2020); Divianjella et al. (2020) showed that a person's religion influences their attitude toward a product or brand. Basically, a person's religious belief can affect his or her buying interest.

The fourth aspect is halal certificate which is an article issued by an Islamic body stating that the product meets Islamic requirement and can be used by Muslims. Noordin et al. (2014) defines halal certification as the process of verifying products or services following the Sharia law. Halal certification may become an anchor for the Muslim consumers in choosing a wide assortment of products whose Halal requirements are initially doubted Global world certainly needs a halal certificate or logo to meet the needs of Muslims as it may provide a reassurance to the Muslim costumers that the product is safe for consumption (Ambaliand Bakar 2014). The halal certification may be realized in the halal logos in the product packaging (Fischer 2019).

The fifth aspect is Trust which refers to the expectancy held by one party that a word, record, or promise from the other party is reliable (Rotter 1971). Consumer's Trust is a major factor in long-term consumer's performance (Lee et al. 2011). In other words, Trust is a belief that the other party will act as expected. Research conducted by Kim et al. (2007); Lee et al. (2011); Chen and Chang (2012); Doszhanovand Ahmad (2015); and Falahat(2019) concluded that trust influences costumer's buying interests. Therefore, it can be said that consumers who trust skincare products are expected to have an interest in buying the product. The hypothesis is, thus, proposed that the trust affects purchase intentions.

The sixth aspect is attitude toward a brand which can be defined as a consumer's positive or negative attitude toward the product (Mitchell et al.1981). A positive consumer behavior on the certain brand, may drive any buyers to make purchases on that brand. Meanwhile, the costumer's negative attitude toward the brand will inhibit the purchase action. Attitude affects the consumption of skin care products for men (Souiden and Diagne 2009). It is supported by the results of the research conducted by Garg and Joshi (2018); Bashir (2019); and Aziz (2019) which showed that consumers' attitudes influence their interest in purchasing the products. Therefore, the proposed hypothesis is that attitude affects purchase intentions.

Last but not least is Awareness which refers to human cognitive perceptions and reactions to what they experience (Ambaliand Bakar 2014). Awareness is an essential part of determining the will to select a particular product (Aziz and Chok2013). Awareness exposes the initial phase of the buying process, in which consumers who have not recognized the product become more familiar with it. In other words, awareness means knowledge or understanding of a particular subject or situation (Randolph 2003) in (Bashir 2019). With those concepts of awareness in mind, thus, the term Halal awareness indicates a high thoughtfulness of spiritual rules. Costumers are aware that halal goods are perfect and in accordance with the Sharia Law.

All of the aforementioned aspects are correlated to buying interest. Buying interest is categorized as an individual's likelihood of acquiring a particular commodity and is also an important aspect in measuring consumer behavior (Fishbein and Ajzen1977) in (Lee et al. 2019). Blackwell et al. (2001) in (Lee et al. 2019) define buying interest as "what we think we will buy". Therefore, buying interest is utilized to measure the tendency of consumers to purchase a product. meaning that the stronger the buying interest is, the greater the desire of consumers to buy products will be (Dodds et al. 1991).

# 3. Methods

Quantitative research methodology in form of causal descriptive design was used to analyze variables including perceived value, brand image, religious belief, halal certification, trust, attitude, halal awareness and purchase intention. In addition to that, deductive approach (Creswell 2005) is a characteristic of this study since there is hypothesis testing. Below are the hypotheses which are examined.

- H1 : Perceived value has a positive effect on the Trust
- H2 : Brand image has a positive effect on the Trust
- H3 : Brand image positively affects Attitude
- H4 : Religious Belief has a positive effect on Attitude
- H5 : Religious Belief has a positive effect on Halal Awareness
- H6 : Halal certification has a positive effect on Halal Awareness
- H7 : Trust positively affects Attitude
- H8 : Halal awareness has a positive effect on Attitude
- H9 : Trust positively influences Purchase Intention

H10 : Attitude positively affects Purchase Intentions

H11 : Halal Awareness has a positive effect on Purchase Intentions

### 4. Data Collection

The present study intends to investigate the factors affecting men's buying interest in skincare product. To achieve the objective, the study undertook a survey to male Indonesian followers of the Instagram account that advertises men's skin care products. By utilizing purposive sampling, the 381 male respondents were selected and served as the sample of the study. The majority of respondents were 23-27 years old (41%) and the majority of them were students (48%).

Specifically, this study used two exogenous variables, namely religious belief and halal certification. Meanwhile, the endogenous variables in this study constituted three variables, namely attitude, halal awareness and purchase intention. Those five variables were measured by using a five-point Likert scale, with criteria: 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree, the data were analyzed by performing structural equation modeling with LISREL. The main stages in the data analysis were measurement model test and structural model test. The visualization of those two phases are as follows in Figures 1 and 2.

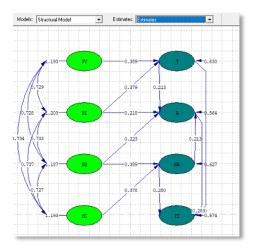


Figure 1. Path Coefficient Result

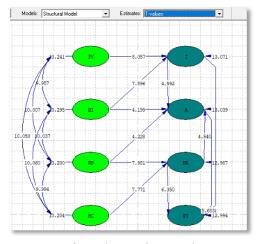


Figure 2. T-Value Result

### 5. Results and Discussion

This section elaborates the results of the on the hypothesis testing. To be specific, the explanation begins with the results of the validity and reliability test and is followed by the hypothesis testing results.

First, the data showed that the good convergent validity is achieved. It is showed by a high standardized loading factor (SLF) value. Hair (2010) advises an SLF value of 0.5. ≥.

In addition to the validity, the reliability particularly construct reliability (CR) is analyzed. CR is a determining measurement that indicates whether or not convergent validity properties are adequate. Hair (2010) states the CR value of 0.7 signifies  $\geq$  good reliability, while the CR value between 0.6 and 0.7 indicates acceptable reliability, with a record of indicator variables showing good validity.

Furthermore, the structural model testing was carried out to examine the significance of influences.

Hypothesis	Relationships Between Variables	Path Coefficient	T value	Result
H1	Perceived Value -> Trust	0,39	8,06	Accepted
H2	Brand Image -> Trust	0,38	7,05	Accepted
Н3	Brand Image -> Attitude	0,22	4,20	Accepted
H4	Religious Belief - > Attitude	0,22	4,22	Accepted
H5	Religious Belief - > Halal Awareness	0,18	3,77	Accepted
Н6	Halal Certification - > Halal Awareness	0,38	7,77	Accepted
H7	Trust -> Attitude	0,21	4,59	Accepted
Н8	Halal Awareness -> Attitude	0,21	4,54	Accepted
H9	Trust -> Purchase Intention	0,28	6,39	Accepted
H10	Attitude -> Purchase Intention	0,28	5,68	Accepted
H11	Halal Awareness - > Purchase Intention	0,28	6,35	Accepted

Table 1. Hypothesis Test Results

The Table 1 indicates that all hypotheses are accepted. Meaning that all variables have influences on the purchasing intention. Specifically, the most aspect affecting the consumer's interest is perceived value, mediated by trust. On the contrary, the religious belief is not a prominent aspect to consider among the buyers.

Referring to the table, that all hypotheses confirmed have a T value above 1.96 (>1.96). Therefore, of the eleven hypotheses tested, all were accepted. The elaborations for the findings are provided below.

First, the H1 was accepted indicating that the value conveyed by Kahf has been well received by its male followers. In line with the theory put forward by Kotler and Keller (2016), perceived value is when consumers receive the difference in total benefits reduced by the total costs to be incurred by consumers. The values received also make the consumers become more confident in the Kahf brand. Respondents agreed that Kahf has a product that suits their needs, is easy to use, and makes them feel confident. This belief leads the consumers to trust the quality of the product, the transactions, and the service that Kahf delivers to the customers. This is parallel to the claim of Payne and Holt (2001) which state that perceived value is a tradeoff between perceived benefits and perceived sacrifices. This can be interpreted that the consumers have desires to buy certain products. In other words, Kahf's Instagram followers already trust Kahf's brand and are willing to purchase Kahf products.

Second, the results of the H2 testing showed that the image built by Kahf is relatively good which in turn affects customer's trust in Kahf. The results confirm the study done by Chinomona (2016) who discovered that brand image affects the level of customer's trust in a brand. The images built by Kahf, among others, are spreading positivity with the concept of minimalist and simplicity; less is more as well as promoting Islamic quality by having the Prophet Muhammad Shalallahu 'Alaihiwa Salam as the model of guidance. Referring to the results of hypothesis tests that have been done, it turns out that the brand image instilled by Kahf greatly affects the consumer's trust in the brand. In other words, these aspects have been well received by the consumers.

Third, in regard to the H3, the results revealed that the image of Kahf perceived by the consumers is good and it is reflected in the consumer's attitude towards Kahf. This is in accordance with the findings of several research such as

the ones conducted by Chang et al. (2016); Chen et al. (2017); Lin & Chuang(2018) which found that brand image can affect customer's attitudes towards the brand. The findings are supported by Keller's theory (1993) saying that the brand image that the customers have regarding the specific offerings is what influences them to act on a product or service. certain. Consumers' likes and dislike of a product become an important factor in promoting the consumer's buying interests. The good image of the companies will make the customers have a good attitude towards the company.

Fourth, the H4 testing found that the higher the respondent's religious beliefs, the better their attitude will be towards Kahf products. This finding is parallel to the results of the relevant studies on religious belief conducted by researchers such as Aksoy and Abdulfatai (2019); Divianjella et al. (2020) who found that a person's religious belief encourages a positive attitude toward his/her behavior. This study measured whether the costumers' level of faith affects their attitudes toward Kahf products which is identified from whether they like or dislike the products.

Fifth, the H5 testing indicated that halal awareness relies heavily on a person's religious beliefs. This finding goes in line with the results of several studies such as those of Nurhayati and Hendars' (2020) as well as Kurniawati and Savitris' (2020). Similarly, the theory put forward by Giorgi and Marsh (1990) confirms that religion and the level of a person's religious state have a positive impact on their ethics. However, the finding in this study was in contrast with the earlier findings from Handriana et al. (2020) in which it showed that religious beliefs have no impact on consumer's awareness. The possible explanation for the difference is probably the gender factor which in the previous study the respondents were mainly women. Although it may cause an interesting argument, a study conducted by Sullins (2006) strengthens the claim with his findings in which men who believe in Judaism and Islam were found to be more religious and active than women. This result confirms the finding of the present study.

Sixth, the H6 testing showed that the halal logo of a product can affect the consumer's halal awareness. These findings corroborate the results of Shahid's et al. study (2019) which found that the halal logo listed on the product makes the consumers become more aware of the need to consume halal products. This condition can be a basis for business actors who choose Muslim costumers as the target to pay attention to the status of the product page.

Seventh, the H7 testing found that the great trust the Muslim men have for the products makes them like the Kahf products more. The results of this hypothesis test are consistent with those of Chetioui's et al. study (2020) which found that trust significantly affects consumer's attitudes. The reliability of Kahf products that they feel turns out to be their basis to show a positive attitude towards the Kahf brand. With the claim as the point of reference, thus, Kahf needs to maintain consumer's trust by offering good products and services. Consumer's trust in a product is the key to the business survival.

Eighth, the H8 accepted implies that the consumer's awareness on the halal product causes them accept the goods. This result is in keeping with Maichum et al. (2017); and Handriana et al. (2020)'s research telling that halal awareness gives significant influences on the consumer's attitude. In other words, the high consumer's awareness on the halal label of products becomes the foundation or motive to purchase the skin care product.

Ninth, the H9 testing found that the consumer's trust in a brand allows consumers to buy the product. These findings broadly support the results of other works which focus on the relation between trust and buying interest (Chen and Chang 2012); (Which 2018); (Sanny et al. 2020). Those studies found that consumers' buying interest is strongly influenced by their trust in the product or brand. In addition to the findings, the present study also found that the role of trusts as the mediator between perceived value and purchase intention is quite significant. Therefore, companies are suggested to invest resources to increase perceived value so that consumer's confidence to purchase the brand gets increased. The statement is reasonable since the reliability of the word, statement or promise given by the company is what the costumer will hold Rotter (1971).

Tenth, the H10 testing showed that costumer's higher attitudes lead to a higher level of buying interest. The findings reflect the results of the earlier works on the correlation between costumer's attitude and costumer's buying interest (Souiden and Diagne 2009); (Bashir 2019); (Divianjella et al. 2020); (Tuhin et al. 2020). The studies revealed that consumers' attitudes have a direct influence on their buying interests. Therefore, in the context of the present study, the positive attitudes of the costumers towards Kahf's product generated costumers' high buying

interest. This finding may be due to the respondent's age which are at the state of maintaining their physical appearance which clearly explains their attitude toward the products

Last but not least was the results of the H11 testing. The test reveals that a person's buying interest is influenced by his or her awareness of the page of a product. These findings share the same consistency with those of Shahid's et al. (2018); Nurhayati and Hendar's (2019) studies which showed that halal awareness is an important partial mediator that strengthens its correlation with the consumer buying interests. The findings indicate that Muslim men who are aware of the halal certificate of Kahf products have a tendency to make purchases on the Kahf products in the future.

### 6. Conclusion

The present study set out to investigate the factors that may contributes to the men's buying interest. Taking all the results together, the study generates several important conclusions. First, men's buying interests are strongly influenced by their attitude, halal awareness and trust in the brand. Of these three variables, attitude is found to be the main driving factor. The findings signify that brand image, religious belief, trust and halal awareness built in consumers are reflected in their attitude. The positive attitude can be maintained by the provision of the programs that involve the costumers. Therefore, it is expected that the companies provide programs that can be a place to nurture consumers' positive attitude towards the brand.

Second which relates to Halal awareness, the findings have shown that the costumers are well aware of the importance of halal status in the products they consume. This means that consumers will be more receptive to products that have guarantee on their page. Kahf and similar companies may take the findings into consideration by providing products that have been certified as halal both in the materials used and in the manufacturing process. In addition, the halal awareness owned by the respondents can be treated as a foundation for halal policy makers and other relevant parties to always prioritize product guarantees.

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# **Biographies**

**AisyahKhoerunnisaNurjamin** is currently pursues a degree in master of management at Telkom University, Bandung, Indonesia. Born in Garut, July, 1999. Aisyah earned her graduated degree from the Business and Management of Tazkia Islamic University, Bogor (2016-2020). Her research interest is in Business Management and Marketing.

Maya Ariyanti is a lecturer at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Telkom University, Born in Bandung, April 16th, 1973, Maya graduated from the Management Undergraduate program of Parahyangan University, Bandung (1991-1996), the Management Graduate of Padjadjaran University (1997-1999), and Postgraduate Business Management of Padiadiaran University (2004-2009). Her attention was focused on Marketing, Management Information Systems, Telecommunication Business, Business Management, and Business Strategy. Prior to joining the Telkom University since 2008, Maya had been a lecturer at Widyatama University, Bandung, during 1999-2008. In Telkom University, she became a member of the formation of the International Program of IM Telkom, the Head of Management Graduate Program of IM Telkom, Vice Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business, and since 2014 she was appointed as Chairman of Expertise Group of Marketing and Consumer Studies. Her scientific publications widely spread in scientific journals as well as dozens of books and teaching modules, which is written or with colleagues. The book of her own, among PengantarManajamenPemasaranuntukAkuntasi Diploma (2004) and SistemInformasiManajemen pada Perusahaan Digital (2006).