



The influence of social proof, product quality, and price on purchasing decisions for beauty products

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of social recommendations by colleagues who also act as influencers, product quality, and price factors on consumer decisions in buying Skintific beauty products in Cirebon City. With a quantitative approach, this study involved 210 respondents, where data was collected through an online survey and analyzed using SPSS software through multiple linear regression techniques, validity tests, reliability, and hypothesis testing. The findings emphasize that social proof has a major role to play in purchasing decisions, followed by product quality and price. Therefore, it is recommended for Skintific marketers to maximize social evidence-based marketing strategies, improve product quality, and set prices that match consumer value perceptions to drive purchase decisions.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In line with the advancement of the times, beauty care has now become a necessity for anyone who wants to have healthy skin, especially for women who crave ideal beauty. One of the demands in the modern era is to maintain physical appearance, which can act as an asset in interacting with the wider community. This is supported by the growing beauty industry that presents various products with the latest innovations, one of which is Skintific. This product is present as a solution for individuals who want to get quality skincare with more advanced technology and ingredients that are claimed to be safe for various skin types. (K.S. Dewi & Hermana, 2023) (Ovirya & Saputri, 2023).

In today's digital era, social proof is essential for consumer decision-making, especially in the beauty industry. (Maulida & Sari, 2022) social proof refers to a person's tendency to follow the opinions or actions of others in determining a decision. In the context of buying beauty products, social proof can come from friends, family, or influencers who have a great influence in the world of beauty. (Perianto, 2022) Influencers who have a large following on social media are often role models for consumers in choosing the right skincare product for their needs. (Dwijantoro et al., 2022).

The existence of friends who also act as influencers is an interesting phenomenon in the world of beauty product marketing. Consumers tend to trust recommendations

given by those closest to them who have tried a particular product. In this regard, Skintific products often get positive reviews from users who share their experiences on social media platforms. Personal experiences shared by friends or (Muthahhira & Efendi, 2022) influencers can give potential consumers confidence to try the same product. (Anjani et al., 2023).

In addition to the Social Proof factor, product quality is also the main consideration for consumers in choosing beauty products. Good product quality can provide the results expected by users, such as healthier, moisturized, and free skin problems. Skintific as one of the rising skincare brands offers a variety of products with high quality claims. This product uses active ingredients that have been dermatologically tested and formulated for different skin types, including sensitive skin. (K. S. Dewi & Hermana, 2023) (Ovirya & Saputri, 2023).

Consumers in the beauty industry are getting smarter in assessing product quality before making a purchase. They don't just rely on ads or testimonials from influencers, but also look for additional information through other user reviews, scientific articles, and beauty discussion forums. Product safety, effectiveness of active ingredients, and long-term results are aspects that are considered in assessing the quality of a skincare product. In this case, Skintific has managed to attract the attention of many consumers with its innovations and product formulations that are claimed to provide real benefits for the skin. (Perianto, 2022).

In addition to social validation and quality of goods, the cost aspect also plays a crucial role in determining purchasing decisions. Cost is often one of the main factors that customers consider before finally choosing to acquire a beauty product. In the skincare industry, product prices can vary depending on the ingredients used, production technology, as well as the marketing strategies implemented by the relevant brands. Skintific offers products with a competitive price range, so it can reach various consumer segments. (Taufiqah, 2024).

For some customers, higher costs are often associated with superior quality. However, there are also those who are looking for goods at more economical prices but still maintain good quality. In this case, the pricing strategy implemented by Skintific is one of the factors that determine the attractiveness of their products in the market. Discounts, bundling promos, as well as loyalty programs are often used as strategies to attract more buyers and increase customer satisfaction. (Fabiola & Suyuthie, 2024) (Lestari & Ali, 2024).

The phenomenon of Social Proof from friends and influencers, product quality, and price in purchasing beauty products shows how consumers today are increasingly selective and critical in making their choices. This change in consumption patterns is also supported by advances in digital technology that facilitate access to information about a product before making a purchase. Consumers can now easily compare different products based on user reviews, video tutorials, as well as recommendations from individuals they trust. Additionally, social media has become a major platform for beauty brands to market their products and build direct interactions with consumers. Through social media, consumers can see firsthand how a product is used by other users and get in-depth information about its benefits and how to use it. An effective digital marketing campaign can increase the exposure of a product as well as build trust among potential buyers. (Pratiwi et al., 2020) (Haque, 2020).

Not only that, changes in consumption patterns are also driven by increasing awareness of the importance of safe and effective skin care. Consumers are now more careful in choosing beauty products by ensuring that the products have received safety certification from the competent regulatory bodies. Therefore, products like Skintific that offer tested dermatological claims tend to be more easily accepted by the market. The decision to purchase beauty products is the result of a variety of complex considerations. Emotional, social, and rational factors all play a role in determining whether or not a

person will buy a product. Trust in a brand, personal experience, and recommendations from others are interrelated elements in the decision-making process. (Susanti et al., 2021).

In the beauty industry, consumer trust is a very valuable asset for a brand. Therefore, building a good reputation through consistent product quality, proper marketing strategies, and transparent communication with consumers is the key to a brand's success in maintaining customer loyalty. Skintific as one of the growing brands in the beauty industry strives to meet these various aspects to increase their competitiveness in the market. (Aghitsni & Busyria, 2022).

With various factors influencing purchasing decisions, consumers increasingly have more control in determining which products suit their needs. Awareness of the importance of choosing quality products that suit your skin type is one of the important steps in achieving optimal skincare results. Therefore, a deeper understanding of how Social Proof, product quality, and price interact in purchasing decisions is important for brands that want to stay relevant in the ever-evolving beauty industry.

Thus, it's critical to comprehend how pricing, product quality, and social proof affect selections to buy. In addition to analyzing the impact of these factors, this study takes into account the local context, namely the traits of Cirebon City consumers who are more susceptible to social influence and price from their surroundings. Another issue is the distinction between social proof from friends and influencers, since there can be big differences in how much trust is placed in each. Because of its high level of popularity among young customers and its active use of digital tactics that are pertinent to current trends in consumer behavior, Skintific was selected as an object (Sidauruk et al., 2024).

2. RESEARCH METHOD

To examine how social proof, product quality, and cost influence consumers' decision to purchase Skintific beauty products in Cirebon City, this study used a quantitative methodology. An online survey was used to collect primary data from 210 female respondents who are active Skintific users and aged between 18 to 35 years old. Purposive sampling was used to select respondents, and distribution was done through approved user communities and retailers. Screening questions were used to confirm user activity.

Five steps from Kotler & Keller's (2016) theory of the consumer decision-making process-problem detection, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase choice, and post-purchase evaluation-were followed in the research model. Multiple linear regression was used to analyze the data using SPSS. To verify the dependability of the model, traditional assumption tests were conducted prior to regression testing, including tests for normality (Kolmogorov-Smirnov), and multicollinearity (VIF value <10).

Before being used on a large scale, the validity and reliability of the questionnaire instruments were checked. By comparing the R-Calculated value with the R-Table (0.135), construct validity was checked and all were considered valid. Cronbach's Alpha was used to test reliability (all variables > 0.6), ensuring the stability of the measuring instrument. Because it can measure the relationship between variables objectively and provably, quantitative methods were used. Hybrid methods are considered most appropriate for generalization, although they can examine motivation in detail. To ensure uniformity, demographic variables such as age, income, and skin type were examined in the first data description after adjusting for respondent selection.

With this basis, this research model can be described as follows:

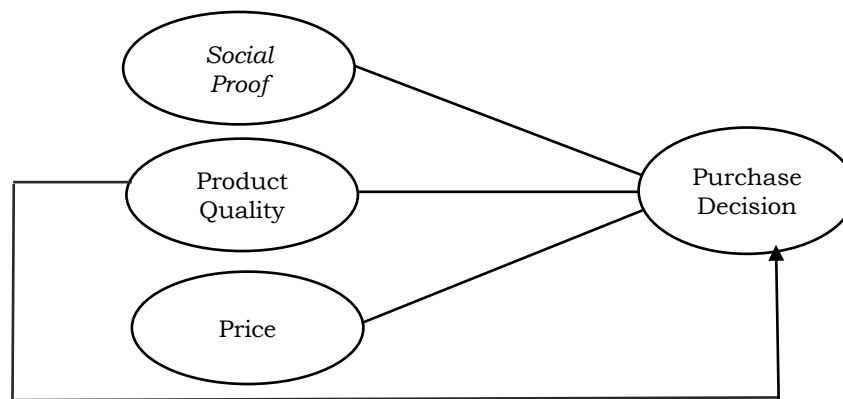


Figure 1. Research Model

Source: Data processed (2025)

The hypothesis in this study is as follows: (a) H1: There is an impact of social influence from friends as well as influencers on the decision to buy Skintific products in Cirebon City. (b) H2: There is an influence of product quality on the decision to buy Skintific products in Cirebon City. (c) H3: There is an effect of the price factor on the decision to buy Skintific products in Cirebon City. Ha: There is an influence of social evidence, product quality, and price on purchasing decisions for Skintific products in Cirebon City.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Multicollinearity Test

To ensure that there is no high linear relationship between independent variables in the regression model, a multicollinearity test is performed. The Tolerance and Variation Inflation Factor (VIF) values must be more than 0.100 and the VIF must be less than 10.00 so that the model does not experience multicollinearity problems.

Table 1. Multicollinearity Test Results

		Coefficients ^a	
		Collinearity Statistics	
Model		Tolerance	BRIGHT
1	Social Proff	.242	4.129
	Product Quality	.860	1.163
	Price	.262	3.817
a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision			

According to the results of the multicollinearity test, all variables had a tolerance of more than 0.100 and a VIF of less than 10.00; for example, social proof (tolerance 0.242, VIF 4.129), product quality (tolerance 0.860, VIF 1.163), and price (tolerance 0.262, VIF 3.817). It can be concluded that this model does not show symptoms of multicollinearity because the entire value is still outside the permissible limit. Thus, independent variables can be legitimately used for regression analysis.

3.2 Determination Coefficient Test

The determination coefficient test shows the ability of the free variable to influence the bound variable. An R^2 value that is getting closer to the number 1 indicates that the independent variable has a greater contribution in explaining the variation in the bound variable.

Table 2. Determinant Test Results

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.731a	.534	.527	2.107

a. Predictors: (Constant), Price, Product Quality, Social Proof

With an R Square value of 0.534, all three social variables of evidence, product quality, and price were collectively responsible for 53.4% of variation in purchasing decisions, while the latter 46.6% was influenced by other factors outside of the study. This shows that these three variables play a significant role in consumer decision-making to purchase Skintific products.

3.3 Uji T

The T test is used to assess the level of significance of the influence of each independent variable on the dependent variable individually. If the significance value (Sig.) < 0.05, then the independent variable has a significant effect on the purchase decision.

Table 3. T Test Results

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Mr.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	6.348	1.702		3.730	.000
	Social Proff	.864	.092	.620	9.446	.000
	Product Quality	.033	.016	.100	2.097	.037
	Price	.133	.065	.134	2.035	.043

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

Based on the T test, the three independent variables had a significant influence on the purchase decision of Skintific products (Sig. < 0.05). Social Proof is the dominant factor with a regression coefficient of 0.864 and a t-value of 9.446 (Sig. = 0.000), indicating that the stronger the Social Proof, the higher the tendency of consumers to buy products. Product quality also contributed with a coefficient of 0.033 and t-count 2.097 (Sig. = 0.037), although the effect was smaller. The price has a moderate influence with a coefficient of 0.133 and a t count of 2.035 (Sig. = 0.043).

Overall, the results of the analysis confirm that Social Proof, product quality, and price significantly influence the purchase decision of Skintific products, with Social Proof emerging as the factor that has the most substantial impact on the consumer decision-making process.

3.4 Multiple Linear Regression Test

Multiple linear regression analysis is applied to understand the relationship between free variables and bound variables through a mathematical model. This test aims to identify the extent to which Social Proof, Product Quality, and Price factors contribute to influencing consumers' decisions in purchasing Skintific products.

Table 4. Multiple Linear Regression Test Results

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Mr.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	6.348	1.702		3.730	.000
	Social Proff	.864	.092	.620	9.446	.000
	Product Quality	.033	.016	.100	2.097	.037
	Price	.133	.065	.134	2.035	.043

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

Based on the results of the multiple linear regression test in Table 3, the regression equation can be formulated as follows:

$$Y=6.348+0.864X_1+0.033X_2+0.133X_3$$

Y = Purchase Decision
X₁ = Social Proof
X₂ = Product Quality
X₃ = Price

A constant of 6,348 indicates that without the influence of Social Proof, Product Quality, and Price, the purchase decision remains at the level of 6,348. The coefficient of 0.864 for Social Proof shows that every single increase in this factor will drive an increase in purchase decisions by 0.864, with a p-value of 0.000, which confirms that the impact is significant. Meanwhile, Product Quality has a coefficient of 0.033, meaning that every single increase in this variable only provides a small addition of 0.033 to the purchase decision, although it remains significant with a p-value of 0.037. The Price Factor, with a coefficient of 0.133, contributed to increasing the purchase decision by 0.133 for every unit increment, with a p-value of 0.043, which also proved a significant influence. From these results, it can be concluded that Social Proof is the most dominant factor in influencing purchasing decisions, followed by Price, and finally Product Quality.

Consumers' purchasing decisions are heavily influenced by social aspects, which contribute greatly to driving their interest in a product. The study reveals that Social Proof has a strong impact, as shown by the high coefficient as well as the t-value indicating a positive correlation between social factors and consumer propensity to buy. This means that the more people who give positive reviews or show interest in a product, the more likely it is that consumers will make a purchase. These findings are in line with the theory that consumers tend to follow the behavior of others in making purchasing decisions, especially when they feel doubtful or less confident about the product to buy. Therefore, marketing strategies that utilize (Muthahhira & Efendi, 2022) (Fabiola & Suyuthie, 2024) (Ariyani & Fauzi, 2023) social proof, such as customer reviews or recommendations from influencers, have proven to be effective in improving consumer purchasing decisions. (Lestari & Ali, 2024).

In addition, the influence of product quality on purchasing decisions also shows significant results. Product quality has a positive contribution that influences consumers in choosing a product to buy. The results of this study are in line with much of the literature that emphasizes that product quality is the main factor considered by consumers before deciding to buy. Products that have superior qualities, such as durability, usability, and appearance, can provide satisfaction for consumers and strengthen their loyalty to the brand. Therefore, companies must prioritize improving product quality to maintain a competitive position in an increasingly fierce market. (Perianto, 2022) (Biryanto & Nurjanah, 2023) (Lubis et al., 2023).

Finally, the influence of price on purchasing decisions also shows a significant relationship although not as strong as Social Proof or product quality. Although price is not a major factor, the study shows that price still plays an important role in purchasing decisions. Consumers tend to compare prices with the quality of the products offered. If the price is considered proportional to the benefits obtained from the product, then consumers will feel more confident to make a purchase. However, prices that are too high or do not match consumer expectations can reduce their interest in buying. Therefore, proper pricing is essential to capture consumers' attention and drive purchase decisions. (Kafifah & Hastuti, 2023) (Basri et al., 2023) (Tamimi & Santoso, 2024).

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the test results, it is evident that social proof has the most dominant positive influence on purchasing decisions, followed by price and product quality. Recommendations from friends or influencers can increase consumer confidence in choosing beauty products. The results of this study indicate that price, product quality, and social evidence have a significant effect on consumer decisions to buy Skintific cosmetic products in Cirebon City. The strongest influence comes from social proof, especially references from friends who act as influencers and are considered more reliable and persuasive. Product quality continues to be an important factor as customers evaluate the efficacy, safety and observable results of the product. Although it does not have as much impact as the other two factors, price remains an important factor, especially for customers who are sensitive to costs and benefits. The results of this study confirm that a long-term social evidence-based marketing approach is needed to increase brand loyalty rather than relying solely on temporary incentives. The results of this study confirm that long-term social evidence-based marketing tactics and not just temporary promotions are needed to increase brand loyalty. Future research on the relationship between types of social proof (friends or influencers) and emotional reasons for purchasing beauty products, as well as the effects of customizing marketing tactics according to demographic and psychographic traits, is also guided by the findings of this study. On the other hand, product quality remains the main aspect evaluated by consumers when considering long-term benefits, while price makes a contribution that depends on consumers' perception of balance. These findings highlight the importance of strengthening social proof in long-term marketing strategies, rather than focusing on short-term promotions. This study also opens up opportunities for further research that can delve deeper into the dynamics between types of social proof, emotional motivation, and consumer psychographic factors in the beauty industry.

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