

Exploration of the Influence of Price and Customer Reviews on Body Lotion Purchase Decisions: A Study on Teenage Users

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the influence of pricing strategies and online customer reviews on the purchasing decisions of teenage users regarding body lotion, specifically focusing on the Scarlett Whitening brand available through the Shopee e-commerce platform. Utilizing a quantitative research approach, data was collected from 112 adolescent respondents in Depok through structured questionnaires. The findings reveal that both pricing and online reviews significantly impact purchase intentions among Gen Z consumers, who exhibit a strong preference for products that balance quality and affordability. The results indicate that competitive pricing and positive online reviews enhance the attractiveness of beauty products, while the integration of social media and influencer marketing further amplifies these effects. The study underscores the necessity for brands to cultivate a positive online reputation and engage with credible influencers to effectively capture the attention and loyalty of this discerning consumer group. Overall, the research highlights the critical role of eWOM (electronic word-of-mouth) and pricing in shaping the purchasing behavior of Gen Z in the beauty skincare market.

1. INTRODUCTION

The internet has become a lifestyle for society, not only for obtaining information but also for fulfilling daily needs. (Dwi et al., 2020). The shift from offline shopping to online shopping has led to significant growth in the e-commerce market (Nasution et al., 2020; Windasari & Zakiyah, 2021). According to data from the Ministry of Trade, the growth in e-commerce transaction value increased by 2.8% in 2024 and even rose by 3.3% in 2025 (Anggela, 2024). A survey conducted by Katadata Insight Center (KIC) in 2023 revealed that consumers of health and beauty products accounted for 14.3% of purchases made through e-commerce (Muhamad, 2023). Katadata also revealed that Shopee is the most popular e-commerce platform among the Indonesian people. Shopee offers a wide range of beauty products, including Scarlet Whitening body lotion. The Scarlet brand is a local brand that excels in the body lotion category, even surpassing international brands like Nivea and Vaseline.

Generation Z (Gen Z), born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, exhibits distinct purchasing behaviors in the beauty and skincare sector, significantly influenced by online reviews and pricing strategies. Understanding these factors is essential for marketers aiming to effectively engage this demographic. One of the most critical aspects of Gen Z's purchasing decisions in beauty skincare is the impact of online reviews, particularly electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). Research indicates that Gen Z consumers heavily rely on online reviews when making purchasing decisions, as these reviews provide valuable insights into product efficacy and brand reputation (Qi, 2023). The credibility of these reviews is paramount; studies show that positive eWOM can significantly enhance purchase intentions, while negative reviews can deter potential buyers (Sherli et al., 2023; Tran et al., 2023). This reliance on peer feedback underscores the importance of maintaining a positive online presence and actively managing customer feedback for brands targeting Gen Z.

Pricing strategies also play a vital role in Gen Z's skincare purchasing decisions. This generation is particularly price-sensitive, often seeking products that offer a balance between quality and affordability. Research has shown that competitive pricing is a significant determinant of purchase intention among Gen Z consumers (Bautista et al., 2023; Norberto M. Secretaria et al., 2023). Furthermore, promotional strategies such as discounts and free shipping can enhance the attractiveness of

products, making them more appealing to this cost-conscious demographic (Said et al., 2023). The perception of price fairness is also crucial; Gen Z consumers are more likely to purchase products they perceive as priced relative to their quality and brand reputation (Sherli et al., 2023).

Moreover, the integration of social media into the purchasing process amplifies the effects of pricing and reviews. Gen Z is known for discovering new beauty products through social media platforms, where influencers play a pivotal role in shaping their perceptions and purchase intentions (H. Nguyen, 2024; Tran et al., 2023). The influence of beauty influencers, particularly those who provide authentic reviews and demonstrate product usage, can significantly sway Gen Z's decisions, often leading to impulsive purchases based on perceived value and social validation (C. Nguyen et al., 2022; Tan & Trang, 2023). This highlights the necessity for brands to collaborate with credible influencers who align with their values and resonate with Gen Z's expectations.

This study aims to analyze the influence of eWOM and price perception on the purchase intention of Gen Z consumers in purchasing Scarlet Whitening body lotion on the Shopee platform. It also seeks to explore how online consumer behavior in the skincare category is shaped by digital trust and price sensitivity.

Although previous studies have widely examined online consumer behavior, there remains a significant gap in understanding how local beauty brands like Scarlet capitalize on Gen Z's digital shopping habits in emerging e-commerce platforms. Most existing literature focuses on global brands or generalized consumer behavior without isolating the critical roles of eWOM credibility and price fairness in purchase intention. This research fills that gap by providing empirical insight into how these two variables affect Gen Z's behavior specifically in the local Indonesian context, which is underexplored in current academic discourse.

Theoretical Background and Hypothesis Development:

1. Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM)

According to the **Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975)**, individuals form intentions to perform behaviors based on their attitudes and subjective norms. eWOM serves as a form of social influence or subjective norm that shapes consumer intention by providing perceived credibility and collective experiences. Gen Z, being digitally native, is particularly influenced by peer-generated content and reviews. Hence, positive and credible eWOM is likely to strengthen purchase intention.

H1: Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) has a significant positive effect on Gen Z's purchase intention of Scarlet Whitedjakning body lotion on Shopee.

2. Price Perception

Based on **Perceived Value Theory (Zeithaml, 1988)**, consumers evaluate the utility of a product by weighing what they receive (product quality, brand trust) against what they give up (price). Price perception - including fairness and promotional benefits — is a key determinant of consumer satisfaction and purchasing decisions. Gen Z is known for being price-conscious and actively seeks value-for-money deals.

H2: Price perception has a significant positive effect on Gen Z's purchase intention of Scarlet Whitening body lotion on Shopee.

3. Both price and online reviews have shown to influence purchase decisions, often acting synergistically. A favorable online review can mitigate high price perception, while competitive pricing can reinforce positive reviews' effects (Bautista et al., 2023). This interaction suggests that the combined effect of price and online reviews could have a significant impact on purchase decisions (Ghozali, 2006).

H3: Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) and Price and simultaneously influence the purchase intention of Scarlet Whitening body lotion on Shopee.

In conclusion, Gen Z's purchasing decisions in the beauty skincare market are profoundly influenced by online reviews and pricing strategies. Marketers must prioritize building a positive online reputation through effective eWOM management while implementing competitive pricing strategies to attract this discerning consumer group. Engaging with influencers who can authentically represent the brand will further enhance the likelihood of capturing Gen Z's attention and loyalty.

Research Model

The research structure shows the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables through a research model.

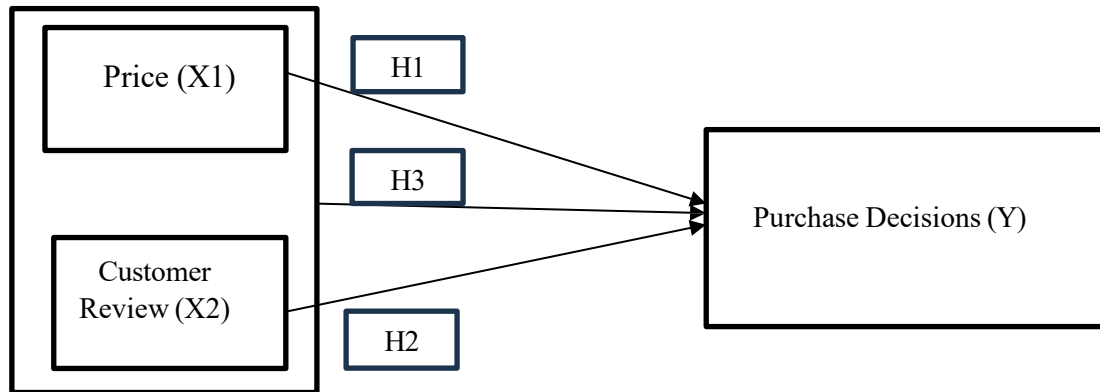


Figure 1. Conceptual Model

2. METHOD

This research uses a quantitative approach, which is a research method that emphasizes measurement with numbers to produce objective data and is supported by statistical analysis (Sugiyono, 2017). The data in question is primary data obtained directly from respondents through the distribution of structured questionnaires. In addition, the researchers obtained supporting data from books, annual reports, journals, and even information or news from newspapers and magazines. This research uses adolescent respondents totaling 112 people taken from high schools in the city of Depok. The number of respondents is considered sufficient to represent the population of teenagers who use Scarlett body lotion purchased through the Shopee e-commerce platform. Quantitative data processing was conducted using the SPSS for Windows version 25 software application, which is easily accessible and relevant to the data processing needs of this research.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the questionnaire distribution that has been conducted, it was found that most respondents are female, with only 2 respondents being male. The results of the instrument test indicate that all instruments are declared valid and reliable. Here is the data that can be presented in Table 1.

Tabel 1. Uji Validitas (Validity Test)

Question	R Value	R Table	Remarks
Price (X1)			
X1.1	0.701	0.1857	Valid
X1.2	0.770	0.1857	Valid
X1.3	0.738	0.1857	Valid
X1.4	0.762	0.1857	Valid
X1.5	0.635	0.1857	Valid
X1.6	0.536	0.1857	Valid
X1.7	0.765	0.1857	Valid
X1.8	0.735	0.1857	Valid

Online Customer Review (X2)			
X2.1	0.697	0.1857	Valid
X2.2	0.706	0.1857	Valid
X2.3	0.793	0.1857	Valid
X2.4	0.754	0.1857	Valid
X2.5	0.691	0.1857	Valid
X2.6	0.737	0.1857	Valid
X2.7	0.838	0.1857	Valid
X2.8	0.792	0.1857	Valid
X2.9	0.783	0.1857	Valid
X2.10	0.717	0.1857	Valid
X2.11	0.583	0.1857	Valid
X2.12	0.722	0.1857	Valid
Purchase Decision (Y)			
Y.1	0.650	0.1857	Valid
Y.2	0.633	0.1857	Valid
Y.3	0.712	0.1857	Valid
Y.4	0.746	0.1857	Valid
Y.5	0.745	0.1857	Valid
Y.6	0.747	0.1857	Valid
Y.7	0.745	0.1857	Valid
Y.8	0.726	0.1857	Valid

Source: Author, 2024

Validity testing is an instrument test used to show the extent to which a measuring tool can be used in a measurement (Anggraini et al., 2022; Ulum, 2016). Instruments can be categorized as valid if Rvalue is greater than Rtable, which has the formula $df = (N-2)$ with a result of 0.1857 at a 5% significance level. Based on Table 1, all instruments have Rvalue greater than Rtable, so all instruments can be categorized as valid and can be used further. Meanwhile, the reliability test results are indicated by a Cronbach’s alpha value greater than 0.6 (Ghozali, 2006). Here is the table presenting the results of the reliability test calculations

Tabel 2. Reliability test

Variable	Cronbach Alpha	Remarks
Price (X1)	.851	Reliable
Online Customer Review (X2)	.918	Reliable
Purchase Decision (Y)	.857	Reliable

Source: Author, 2024

Based on Table 2, the price variable has a Cronbach’s alpha value of 0.851, the online customer review variable has a value of 0.918, and the purchase decision variable as variable Y has a Cronbach’s alpha value of 0.857, so the overall data instrument is reliable or the entire instrument is

considered a tool that can be used to measure the level of consistency of a variable or construct. (Anggraini et al., 2022; Ulum, 2016). The researchers also conducted an F-test analysis to measure the level of simultaneous influence and a t-test to measure partial influence (Sugiyono, 2017).

Tabel 3. f test

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	761.368	2	380.684	60.257	.000 ^b
	Residual	688.623	109	6.318		
	Total	1449.991	111			

a. Dependent Variable: Keputusan pembelian

b. Predictors: (Constant), Online Customer Review, Harga

Tabel 4. t test

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Coefficients Beta		
1	(Constant)	9.262	2.361		3.924	.000
	Harga	.188	.080	.196	2.351	.021
	Online Customer Review	.376	.053	.588	7.053	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Keputusan pembelian

Based on the table above, it is known that the Sig value for the price variable (X1) is $0.021 < 0.05$ and the t-statistic value is greater than the t-table value, which is $2.351 > 1.98$, thus it can be concluded that there is an influence between the Price variable (X1) and Purchase Decision (Y). The Online Customer Review variable (X2) received a Sig value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05, and the t-statistic value is greater than the t-table value, which is $7.053 > 1.98$, thus it can be concluded that there is an influence between the online customer review variable (X2) and Purchase Decision. (Y). Next, calculate the coefficient of determination as shown in the table below:

Tabel 5. Coefficient Determination

Variable	R square
Price	.308
Online Customer Review	.501
Price and Online Customer Review	.525

Source: Author, 2024

Based on the table above, it is known that the price variable (X1) has an R Square value of 0.308 or 30.8%, indicating that there is a 30.8% influence of price on purchasing decisions. The Online Customer Review variable (X2) has an R Square value of 0.501 or 50.1%, indicating the extent of the partial influence of Online Customer Reviews on purchasing decisions. Meanwhile, the Price and Online Customer Review variables have an R Square value of 0.525, indicating that there is a 52.5% simultaneous influence of the price variable (X1) and Online Customer Reviews (X2) on purchasing decisions (Y), with the remaining influence attributed to other variables not examined in this study, such as brand ambassadors, social media, online customer ratings, and others.

The findings of this study indicate that both price (X1) and online customer reviews (X2) significantly influence purchase decisions (Y) among teenage consumers, specifically within Generation Z. The R-squared value of 0.525 suggests that the combination of these variables explains approximately 52.5% of the variance in purchasing behavior.

Price is a critical factor for consumers because they tend to compare prices to maximize value, especially among price-sensitive groups like teenagers (Ghozali, 2006). This supports prior research by Norberto et al. (2023), which emphasizes that price plays a pivotal role in beauty product purchase decisions within this demographic. In addition, online reviews contribute substantially in building trust and reducing uncertainty, as peer recommendations are perceived as more credible than traditional advertising (Sherli et al., 2023; Qi, 2023).

Generation Z consumers heavily rely on electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) and user testimonials when making purchase choices, as indicated in Tran et al. (2023). Positive reviews tend to increase purchase intent, while negative reviews can deter consumers. This reliance has been further intensified by the growing use of social media and e-commerce platforms, where online reviews and influencer marketing are integral to shaping consumer behavior (Tan & Trang, 2023).

In light of these findings, it is evident that companies should focus on offering competitive prices and actively managing their online reputation through positive reviews and collaborations with credible influencers. Such strategies are essential to increase purchase likelihood and foster brand loyalty in the increasingly digital and competitive beauty market. Therefore, developing integrated digital marketing strategies that leverage price positioning and online reviews is crucial in influencing Gen Z consumers' buying behavior.

4. CONCLUSION

Gen Z's purchasing decisions in the beauty skincare market are profoundly influenced by online reviews and pricing strategies. Marketers must prioritize building a positive online reputation through effective eWOM management while implementing competitive pricing strategies to attract this discerning consumer group. Engaging with influencers who can authentically represent the brand will further enhance the likelihood of capturing Gen Z's attention and loyalty.

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