Quest Journals
Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science
Volume 12 ~ Issue 6 (2024) pp: 92-96
ISSN(Online):2321-9467
www.questjournals.org

Research Paper

The Influence of Product Knowledge on Purchase Decisions of Male Skincare Users

Rainova Dinar Obesta Simarmata[1], Abdhy Aulia Adnans[2], Eka Danta Ginting[3]
[1,2&3](*Department of Industry and Organization Psychology, Faculty of Psychology, University of North Sumatera)*
Corresponding Author: Rainova Dinar Obesta Simarmata

ABSTRACT:. *The societal landscape surrounding skincare has evolved, with both men and women now embracing its importance beyond mere aesthetic concerns. Formerly perceived as a challenge to traditional masculinity, men's skincare routines are now widely acknowledged as essential for maintaining skin health and appearance. This paradigm shift is evident in the increasing prevalence of skincare practices among men, driven by a desire for smooth, blemish-free skin and heightened awareness of the protective benefits against sun damage and skin cancer. Surveys affirm this trend, indicating a widespread recognition among men of skincare as an investment in their overall well-being. Central to this phenomenon is the role of product knowledge, which empowers consumers to make informed choices tailored to their specific needs and preferences. Research demonstrates that a deep understanding of skincare products significantly influences purchase decisions, elucidating 21.1% of the variability in male consumers' choices. However, the complexity of consumer behavior necessitates consideration of various factors beyond product knowledge, including personal preferences, marketing strategies, and social influences, in crafting effective marketing approaches that resonate with the diverse needs of male skincare consumers.*

KEYWORDS: *Purchase Decision, Product Knowledge, Skincare, Male Consumers, Quantitative Research.*

***R**eceived 01 June, 2024; **R**evised 08 June, 2024; **A**ccepted 10 June, 2024 © The author(s) 2024.*
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I. INTRODUCTION

Awareness of the importance of skincare is now shared by both women and men. Previously, some believed that men using skincare products were less masculine. Today, it has become a necessity for men to care for their facial skin for both aesthetic reasons, like brightening the skin and reducing acne scars, and health reasons, such as using sunscreen to protect against UV rays and prevent skin cancer. A Jakpat survey (2022) found that 94% of 814 men view skincare as an investment in skin health, and over 80% believe ideal skin is acne-free, blemish-free, oil-free, and smooth.

Product knowledge is the understanding of a product's features and the benefits it provides to customers. The focus is on transforming product features into benefits that customers can experience. Consumer decision-making in purchasing products can be influenced by various factors, including past positive experiences. Both external and internal factors, as well as stimuli, shape consumer responses.

According to a survey conducted by Zap in Men/O/Logy, 19.1% of men feel handsome if they have a clean and smooth face. Additionally, 55.4% of men have used makeup products or men's makeup products, including skincare. Furthermore, 56.6% of them feel they understand skincare ingredients, with 4.1% feeling they understand them very well (ZapClinic, 2024).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTESIS

2.1. Purchase Decision

Kotler and Keller (2020), a purchase decision is made by buyers regarding which brand to buy from the available options. This decision is part of a broader buying process that starts with recognizing a need and extends to post-purchase behavior. Peter and Olson (2013) describe a purchase decision as the process where consumers combine all the knowledge they have acquired to choose between two or more options, aiming to select one product. Schiffman and Kanuk (2008) define a purchase decision as a selection process among

multiple choices, resulting in a decision to buy or not to buy. Alternatives must be available for consumers to make a decision, and the process involves seeking or receiving different information.

According to Kotler & Armstrong (2008), the purchase decision process comprises four key indicators. Firstly, consumers tend to solidify their decision to purchase after acquiring relevant product information from various sources. Secondly, they often opt for a particular brand due to strong personal preference, which could stem from the brand's alignment with their needs or desires. Thirdly, purchases are commonly driven by a sense of want or necessity; consumers make buying decisions when they feel a desire for the product or recognize a genuine need it fulfills. Lastly, the decision-making process can be significantly influenced by recommendations from others, highlighting the importance of social influence in consumer behavior.

2.2. Product Knowledge

Product knowledge refers to consumers' perception of a product, incorporating their experiences with it (Beatty & Smith, 1987). Brucks (1985) suggests that product knowledge stems from consumers' memories or known information. Meanwhile, according to Lin and Zhen (2005), it is based on consumers' awareness or understanding of a product, or their trust in it. Peter and Olson (2010) define product knowledge as the information consumers possess about a product they intend to buy, encompassing knowledge of its attributes or characteristics, its benefits and uses, and its value, which ultimately leads to consumer satisfaction with the product.

Consumers have different levels of product knowledge, formed through combining concepts into broader categories. These levels aid in understanding consumer product knowledge. They include: product class (e.g., coffee), product form (e.g., similar brands), brand (e.g., different manufacturers), and model/features (e.g., specific attributes). These levels help consumers organize their knowledge for decision-making.

Peter & Olson (2010) propose three dimensions of product knowledge: attributes, benefits, and value as satisfaction provider. Attributes encompass physical and abstract characteristics evaluated affectively. Benefits include functional and psychosocial consequences, considering both positive and negative outcomes. Product value involves emotional impacts related to needs and goals, identified through instrumental and terminal values.

2.3. Hypotesis

The influence of product knowledge on purchase decisions is a well-established phenomenon, with higher levels of product knowledge typically correlating with increased purchasing behavior. Product knowledge has a positive influence on purchase decision. The higher the product knowledge possessed by consumers, the higher the level of purchase decision. Based on the preceding discussion, the following conclusions can be drawn:

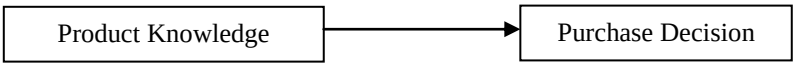


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

III. RESEARCH METHOD

The research method employed in this study follows a systematic approach aimed at investigating the relationship between product knowledge and purchase decisions among male skincare consumers. Firstly, the study identified three key variables: the dependent variable, Purchase Decision (Y); the independent variable, Product Knowledge (X). Operational definitions were established for each variable, ensuring clarity and consistency in measurement. The research population comprised male skincare consumers, with a sample size of 272 individuals selected through accidental sampling. Data collection involved the administration of scales for Purchase Decision and Product Knowledge employing Likert scale items for each construct. The reliability and validity of the measurement instruments were assessed through various statistical tests, including Cronbach's alpha for reliability and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) for validity.

Furthermore, the research proceeded with data analysis using Regression Analysis explore the relationship between product knowledge and purchase decisions. Prior to hypothesis testing, classic assumptions such as normality and linearity were assessed to ensure the robustness of the analysis. Normality was examined using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, while multicollinearity was evaluated through Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) analysis. Heteroskedasticity was assessed using the Glejser test to detect any inconsistencies in residual variances across observations. By adhering to these methodological steps, the study aims to provide comprehensive insights into the dynamics of consumer behavior in the male skincare market, contributing valuable knowledge to both academic research and practical marketing strategies.

* Corresponding Author: Rainova Dinar Obesta Simarmata

IV. RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Overview of the Research Subject

According to the generational theory by Codrington et al. (2004), humans are categorized into five generations based on birth years: Baby Boomers (1946-1964), Generation X (1965-1980), Generation Y or Millennials (1981-1994), and Generation Z (1995-2010). The research subjects consist of 201 individuals from Generation Z (74%), 69 individuals from Generation Y (25%), and 1 individual each from Generation X and Baby. Based on their occupations, the majority of the subjects are private employees, totaling 106 individuals (39%). This is followed by students with 75 individuals (28%), civil servants with 66 individuals (24%), entrepreneurs with 16 individuals (6%), and state-owned enterprise employees with 9 individuals (3%).

The majority of the research subjects have a high school education (SMA/SMK), totaling 114 individuals (41%). This is followed by subjects with a bachelor's degree (S1/D4) with 116 individuals (43%), an associate degree (D3) with 28 individuals (10%), and a master's degree (S2) with 14 individuals (5%). The skincare products most commonly used by male consumers are facial wash and sunscreen.

4.2. Overview of The Research Subject

4.2.1. Normality Test

The normality test is typically performed using a Q-Q plot. Data is considered to follow a normal distribution if the expected values from the normal distribution align with the observed values on the Q-Q plot, appearing as a diagonal line connecting the values (Santosa & Ashari, 2005).

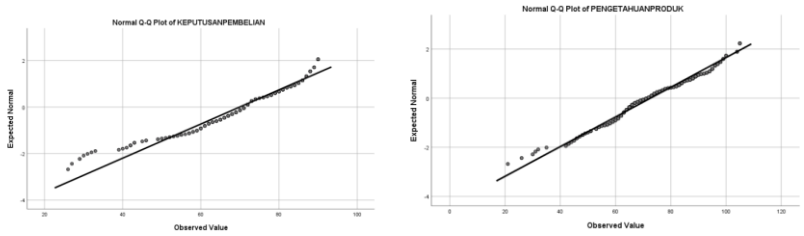


Figure 2: QQ-Plot of Purchase Decision and Product Knowledge

4.2.2. Linearity test

From the linearity test, it can be observed that the significance value of linearity between the two variables is 0.000, which means it is < 0.05. Therefore, it can be said that there is a linear relationship between product knowledge and purchase decision.

ANOVA Table

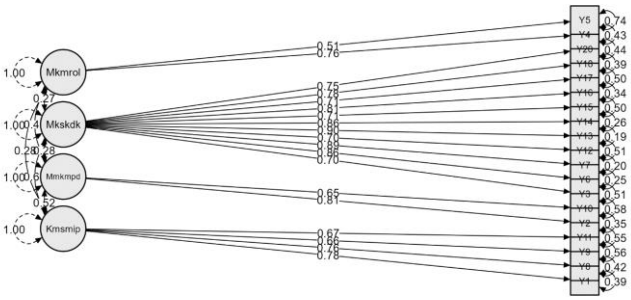
			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Y * X	Between Groups	(Combined)	35669.804	49	727.955	30.145	.000
		Linearity	32926.877	1	32926.877	1363.537	.000
		Deviation from Linearity	2742.928	48	57.144	2.366	.000
	Within Groups		5360.887	222	24.148		
	Total		41030.691	271			

4.2.3. Construct Validity

In this study, construct validity testing will be conducted through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). From the CFA, it can be determined that the model fits well.

4.2.2.1. Purchase Decision

Drawing from the foregoing data of **Figure 3** and **Table 1,** It can be affirmed that the cross-loading values on the constructs (>0.5) representing each aspect exceed those of the values on other aspects.

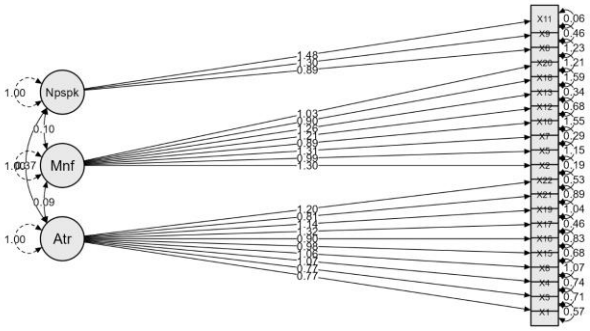


Factor loadings

						95% Confidence Interval		
Factor	Indicator	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	Lower	Upper	Std. Est. (all)
Npspk	X1	0.766	0.059	13.053	< .001	0.651	0.881	0.711
	X3	0.767	0.063	12.140	< .001	0.643	0.890	0.674
	X4	1.074	0.072	14.906	< .001	0.933	1.215	0.780
	X8	1.059	0.081	13.142	< .001	0.901	1.217	0.716
	X15	0.984	0.068	14.372	< .001	0.850	1.118	0.765
	X16	0.903	0.071	12.640	< .001	0.763	1.043	0.703
	X17	1.315	0.072	18.299	< .001	1.174	1.456	0.888
	X19	1.140	0.081	14.144	< .001	0.982	1.298	0.746
	X21	0.812	0.071	11.471	< .001	0.673	0.951	0.653
	X22	1.199	0.070	17.222	< .001	1.062	1.335	0.854
Mnf	X2	1.303	0.062	20.865	< .001	1.181	1.426	0.947
	X5	0.990	0.079	12.537	< .001	0.835	1.145	0.679
	X7	1.309	0.065	19.997	< .001	1.180	1.437	0.925
	X10	0.893	0.086	10.349	< .001	0.724	1.062	0.583
	X12	1.206	0.073	16.586	< .001	1.063	1.349	0.826
	X13	1.261	0.065	19.322	< .001	1.133	1.389	0.907
	X18	0.897	0.087	10.308	< .001	0.726	1.067	0.580
	X20	1.026	0.081	12.629	< .001	0.867	1.186	0.683
Atr	X6	0.887	0.080	11.097	< .001	0.731	1.044	0.624
	X9	1.298	0.074	17.444	< .001	1.153	1.444	0.886
	X11	1.477	0.072	20.579	< .001	1.336	1.617	0.986

Figure 3 and Table 2

4.2.2.2. Product Knowledge



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	X16	0.903	0.071	12.640	< .001	0.763	1.043	0.703
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Figure 3 and Table 3

4.2.3. Reliability

The third step involves assessing reliability, where a variable is considered reliable if it has a Cronbach's alpha value of ≥ 0.6.

a. Purchase decision

The reliability test of the purchase decision variable is conducted using Cronbach's alpha with reliability values per dimension of 0.801, 0.668, 0.927, and 0.950.

b. Product knowledge

The reliability test of the product knowledge variable is conducted using Cronbach's alpha with reliability values per dimension of 0.928, 0.919, and 0.869.

4.4. Research Hypothesis Testing

The calculated Sig value is 0.000, indicating that if the p-value is less than 0.05, it can be concluded that product knowledge significantly influences purchase decisions. Furthermore, examining the contribution of product knowledge to purchase decisions a coefficient of determination (R-square) of 0.211. This implies that product knowledge effectively contributes 21.1% to enhancing male consumers' purchase decisions, while the remaining 78.9% (100% - 21.1%) is influenced by other factors not examined in this study.

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10599.835	1	10599.835	72.234	.000[b]
	Residual	39620.544	270	146.743		
	Total	50220.379	271			

a. Dependent Variable: KEPUTUSANPEMBELIAN

b. Predictors: (Constant), PENGETAHUANPRODUK

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.459[a]	.211	.208	12.114

a. Predictors: (Constant), PENGETAHUANPRODUK

Figure 4: Regression Analysis

V. CONCLUSION

Product knowledge plays a significant role in influencing purchase decisions, particularly among male skincare consumers. The findings of this study indicate that the more knowledgeable consumers are about a product, the more likely they are to make a purchase decision. Specifically, product knowledge was found to account for 21.1% of the variation in purchase decisions. This underscores the importance of educating consumers about the features, benefits, and proper use of skincare products to enhance their confidence and willingness to buy. However, it is also important to recognize that 78.9% of the factors influencing purchase decisions were not explored in this study. These other factors could include personal preferences, marketing strategies, brand reputation, social influences, price sensitivity, and external economic conditions. Understanding these additional influences requires further research to provide a comprehensive picture of the decision-making process. Therefore, while product knowledge is undoubtedly a crucial factor in the purchase decisions of male skincare products, a holistic understanding of consumer behavior must consider a broader range of factors. This comprehensive approach can help businesses develop more effective marketing strategies and improve customer satisfaction by addressing the diverse elements that influence purchasing decisions.

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