

**THE INFLUENCE OF CONFORMITY CONSUMPTION
BEHAVIOR AND PRODUCT ATTRIBUTES ON THE DECISION
TO PURCHASE SKINCARE PRODUCTS
(Study in State University Students in the City of Medan)**

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Abstract

This study aims (1) to determine the effect of Conformity Consumption Behavior on purchasing decisions for skin care products, (2) to ascertain the impact of Product Attributes on the purchasing decisions of skin care products, and (3) to examine the combined influence of Conformity Consumption Behavior and Product Attributes on purchasing decisions for skin care products. The research employs a quantitative method. The results of this study yield a multiple linear regression equation: $Y = 6.453 + 0.172 X_1 + 0.647 X_2$. Partially, Conformity Consumption Behavior demonstrates a positive and significant effect, as evidenced by a t-value value of 2.571, exceeding the t-table value of 1.1985. Similarly, Product Attributes exhibit a positive and significant effect, with a t-value of 8.830 surpassing the t-table value of 1.985. Simultaneously, the combined impact of Conformity Consumption Behavior and Product Attributes on the decision to purchase skin care products is demonstrated by an F-value of 77.803, surpassing the F-table value of 3.09. Notably, the variable with the most dominant influence in this study is Product Attributes, with a value of 8.830.

Keywords: *Conformity Consumption Behavior, Product Attribute, Purchase Decision*

1. INTRODUCTION

The economic landscape of Indonesia has witnessed considerable development, paralleled by a surge in societal complexity. This evolution has brought about an escalation in consumptive tendencies and increased purchasing power among the populace. Consequently, there has been a tangible and rapid transformation in consumption patterns and lifestyles, with a notable shift towards more opulent and extravagant trends. This shift has positioned shopping as a pivotal form of consumption activity, exerting a substantial influence on economic growth. According to the data derived from the Central Statistics Agency in 2022, the average consumption expenditure of the Indonesian population reached an impressive Rp2.56 quadrillion in the third quarter, making a substantial contribution of 50.38% to the national GDP.

Delving specifically into the city of Medan, the North Sumatra Provincial Statistical Office's 2022 data highlights an average consumption expenditure of Rp. 1,851,065. This expenditure comprises Rp. 803,088 allocated to food and Rp. 1,047,977 for non-food items. Notably, Medan has secured the position as the second city with the highest consumption levels in North Sumatra. This indicates the profound impact of economic development on the consumption patterns within urban centers.

The contemporary technological landscape plays a pivotal role in facilitating both consumers and businesses to meet the evolving demands of consumption. The advancement in information technology and the burgeoning influence of social media marketing, particularly, have manifested as both direct and indirect marketing strategies.

These strategies aim to augment product recall, shape attitudes, and enhance overall product recognition (Angela & Siregar, 2021). This transformative trend has proven highly effective in steering consumer behavior away from traditionally rational patterns towards more irrational tendencies.

University students, being an integral part of the digitally connected generation, exhibit a notable shift in consumption behavior (Purdy, 2017). The increasing reliance on online shopping facilities has led to significant lifestyle changes among students (Nababan & Siregar, 2022). This transformative trend has given rise to a form of consumerism that is not solely driven by practical needs but is equally motivated by the pursuit of pleasure and the desire to embody a particular lifestyle. The susceptibility of university students to such influences is heightened by their transitional phase, being pre-adults, where considerations about the future often intertwine with the influence of societal trends and fashionable modes (V. A. Abdullah, 2017).

The impact of skincare trends transcends gender boundaries, influencing both women and men, as evidenced by a survey on "Beauty Trends 2022" conducted by Jakpat, revealing that 64% of male respondents prioritize facial skin appearance, associating good skin conditions with increased confidence. This societal shift is reflected in the proliferation of skincare product brands, originally designed for women but now accommodating men, with some even involving men as brand ambassadors. The 2022 data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) further underscores the substantial growth (9.61%) in the cosmetics industry, encompassing pharmaceuticals, chemicals, and traditional medicine. In tandem with this industry growth, beauty clinics such as MS Glow Aesthetic Clinic, Bening's Clinic, Scarlett Beauty Lounge, and others have become prominent players.

Skincare products, initially perceived as tools to enhance physical attractiveness, have evolved into primary necessities, impacting social dynamics, particularly among students. Research by Adnan (Journal of Applied, 2020) suggests that discriminatory behavior based on facial skin conditions is evident in social interactions, perpetuating the notion of beauty privilege. The study also indicates that around 85% of students in major cities, according to Shiqliyya (2021), are influenced by appearance, underscoring the societal pressure on students to conform to skincare routines and impulsively purchase expensive, renowned brands.

The heightened awareness among students regarding skincare product safety is a response to widespread reports of hazardous ingredients. A press release from BPOM in 2022 identified 499 unregistered or unsafe skincare products, emphasizing the need for consumer vigilance. In this competitive landscape, manufacturers must discern market needs, maintain customer loyalty Kotler & Armstrong (2018), and provide products that not only attract buyers but also serve as reliable consumer information sources (Beyhaki & Yulianto, 2017). Additionally, ensuring product availability is crucial to meeting diverse consumer demands (Marpaung et al., 2020). This entails a comprehensive approach to product development, marketing, and distribution in an era marked by technological advancements and dynamic consumer behaviors.

In this study, the focus of the problem formulation is divided into three main aspects, each reflecting the influence of specific factors on the purchasing decisions of skincare products among students in State Universities in Medan. Firstly, the study examines how Conformity Consumption Behavior influences the purchasing decisions of skincare products among students. Secondly, it analyzes the influence of Product Attributes on the purchasing decisions of skincare products among students. Thirdly, the

study investigates how the combination of Conformity Consumption Behavior and Product Attributes influences the purchasing decisions of skincare products among students. By detailing these questions, the research aims to explore the factors influencing the consumer preferences of students regarding skincare products and to understand the extent to which Conformity Consumption Behavior and Product Attributes play a role in their purchasing decisions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Marketing Theory

According to Thamrin Abdullah & Tantri (2016), marketing is the process of creating, distributing, promoting, and setting prices for goods, services, and ideas to facilitate satisfying exchange relationships with customers in order to build and maintain positive relationships with stakeholders.

2.2. Consumer Behavior

According to Wirapraja, Aribowo, Hariyanti, Basatha, & Rahmawati (2021), consumer behavior is the process of searching, selecting, purchasing, using, and evaluating products aimed at meeting needs and satisfying consumer desires.

2.3. Consumption Behavior

According to Swasta & Handoko (2018), consumption behavior is the direct involvement of individuals in obtaining and using goods and services, including the decision-making process and preparation for these activities. Nitisusatro (2012) distinguishes rational consumption behavior and irrational consumption behavior based on rational considerations.

a. Rational Consumption Behavior

- The product provides optimal utility for the consumer.
- The product is genuinely needed by the consumer.
- The quality of the product is assured.
- The price is affordable.

b. Irrational Consumption Behavior

- Buying a product simply because the brand is well-known.
- Purchasing a product only because it is on sale or to obtain a bonus.
- Buying a product out of fear of being outdated.
- Consumption solely for showing off or prestige.

2.4. Conformity Consumption Behavior

Conformity Consumption Behavior is an individual's consumption behavior influenced by a group as part of the decision-making process (Hayran et al., 2016). Martasari & Arisandy (2018) divide Conformity Consumption Behavior indicators into two aspects: Normative Aspect and Informative Aspect.

- a. Normative Aspect: Adjustment to the desires or expectations of others to gain acceptance from the group.
- b. Informative Aspect: Adjustment due to the belief in beneficial information from the group.

2.5. Product Attributes

Product attributes are fundamental in creating a product (Oscar & Megantara, 2020). According to Armstrong & Kotler (2016), product attributes are divided into three parts: product quality, product features, and product design style.

- a. Product Quality
 - A primary positioning tool for marketers, associated with customer satisfaction.
- b. Product Features
 - A competitive tool to differentiate a company's product from its competitors.
- c. Style and Design of the Product
 - Encompasses both appearance and the core aspects of the product.

2.6. Purchase Decisions

An individual's decision to purchase a product is a collection of several purchase decision options (Soraya & Siregar, 2021). According to Tanady and Fuad (2020), consumer purchasing decisions are influenced by how the decision-making process is carried out. Melinda (2017) identify indicators of purchase decisions:

- a. Product Choice
 - Consumers decide whether to buy a product or use their money for other purposes.
- b. Brand Choice
 - Buyers decide which brand to purchase based on differences between brands.
- c. Retailer Choice
 - Buyers decide which retailer to visit based on various considerations.
- d. Purchase Timing
 - Consumer decisions regarding the timing of purchases may vary.
- e. Purchase Quantity
 - Consumers decide how much of a product to buy at a given time.
- f. Payment Method
 - The process and method of payment significantly influence a person's purchase decision.

2.7. Framework of Thought

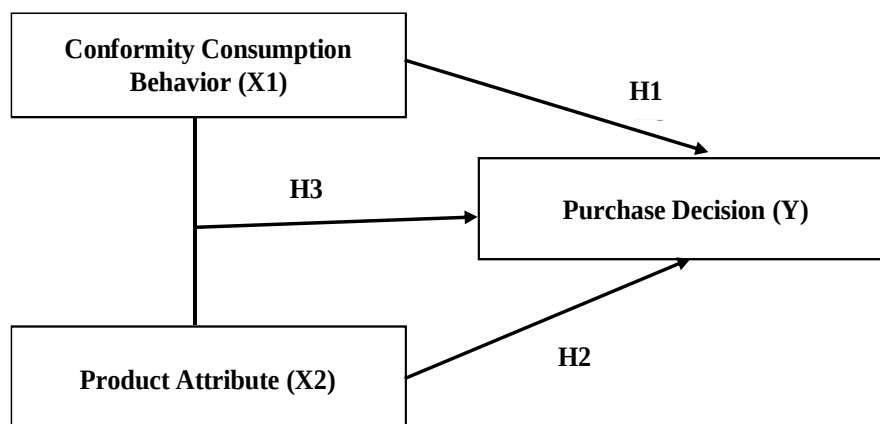


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Hypotheses can be expressed as follows:

- H0: Conformity Consumption Behavior and Product Attributes do not affect the purchasing decisions of skincare products among students in state universities in the city of Medan.
- H1: Conformity Consumption Behavior influences the purchasing decisions of skincare products among students in state universities in the city of Medan.
- H2: Product Attributes influence the purchasing decisions of skincare products among students in state universities in the city of Medan.
- H3: Both Conformity Consumption Behavior and Product Attributes influence the purchasing decisions of skincare products among students in state universities in the city of Medan.

3. METHOD

3.1. Research Design

The research design employed in this study is quantitative research, which utilizes instruments (data collection tools) generating numerical data (Sugiyono, 2017). This research also adopts an associative approach with the aim of illustrating and measuring the hypothesis of the correlation between two or more variables (Sugiyono, 2017).

3.2. Population and Sample

The population in this study comprises students of Public Higher Education Institutions in the city of Medan, North Sumatra Province, who are users of skincare products. These institutions include:

- Universitas Sumatera Utara
- Politeknik Negeri Medan
- Politeknik Kesehatan Departemen Kesehatan Medan
- Politeknik Teknologi Kimia Industri Negeri Medan
- Politeknik Negeri Media Kreatif.

The sampling method used in this study is non-probability sampling (Sugiyono, 2017), and the sample determination technique is purposive sampling based on specified criteria, including:

- Students of D3/S1 programs at Public Higher Education Institutions in Medan
- Age between 18 – 25 years
- Residing in Medan
- Users of skincare products.

The sample size in the study is determined using the Lemeshow formula as follows:

$$n = \frac{z^2 \cdot p \cdot (1 - p)}{L^2}$$

Explanation:

n = Minimum sample size

zα = Standard distribution value (5% = 1.96)

p = Prevalence outcome, as there is no available data, it is set to 50%

L = Precision level 10%

Based on the formula above, it can be observed:

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0,5 \times (1 - 0,5)}{0,1^2}$$
$$n = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0,5 \times (1 - 0,5)}{0,01^2}$$
$$n = 96,4 \text{ or } 96.$$

3.3. Types and Data Collection Techniques

The types of data in this research consist of primary and secondary data (Sugiyono, 2017). Primary data is obtained from the results of questionnaires, while secondary data is obtained from books, articles, journals, and laws related to the variables under investigation.

The data collection technique employed in this study is the questionnaire/survey presented in the form of a Google Form and distributed directly to the respondents.

3.4. Data Analysis Techniques

3.4.1. Instrument Testing

A. Validity Test:

- a. If $r\text{-value} > \text{table value}$, the questionnaire item is valid.
- b. If $r\text{-value} < \text{table value}$, the item is not valid.

B. Reliability Test:

- a. Measure reliability using Cronbach's alpha (α).
- b. If $\alpha > 0.60$, questionnaire responses are reliable.
- c. If $\alpha < 0.60$, responses are not reliable.

3.4.2. Classical Assumption Tests

A. Normality Test:

- a. Use Kolmogorov-Smirnov test.
- b. If significance > 0.05 , data is normally distributed.
- c. If significance < 0.05 , data is not normally distributed.

B. Multicollinearity Test:

- a. Check tolerance and VIF.
- b. Tolerance > 0.10 indicates no multicollinearity.
- c. VIF < 10.00 indicates no multicollinearity.

C. Heteroskedasticity Test:

- a. Detect heteroskedasticity by examining the scatter plot of predicted values against residuals.

3.4.3. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

A. Regression equation:

$$Y = \alpha + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2$$

Explanation:

Y= Purchase Decision

α = Constant

X1= Conformity Consumption Behavior

X2= Product Attributes

b1b2= Respective regression coefficients

3.4.4. Hypothesis Testing

A. Partial Test (T-test):

- If $t\text{-value} > \text{table value}$ or $\text{prob } t\text{-statistic} < 0.05$, independent variables collectively influence the dependent variable.
- If $t\text{-value} < \text{table value}$ or $\text{prob } t\text{-statistic} > 0.05$, independent variables collectively do not influence the dependent variable.
- Significance < 0.05 indicates partial influence.

B. Simultaneous Test (F-test):

- If $F\text{-value} > \text{table value}$ or $\text{prob } F\text{-statistic} < 0.05$, independent variables collectively influence the dependent variable.
- If $F\text{-value} < \text{table value}$ or $\text{prob } F\text{-statistic} > 0.05$, independent variables collectively do not influence the dependent variable.

C. Coefficient of Determination (R^2):

- Indicates the strength of the relationship between independent and dependent variables.
- Adjusted R^2 should not be negative in empirical tests.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Overview of Research Subjects

A. Gender

The activity of beautifying or maintaining skin health using skincare products has been carried out by individuals of all genders. The data on skincare product users based on gender are as follows: 45 males (46.9%) and 51 females (53.1%).

B. Age

Data regarding the age characteristics of respondents in this study are grouped into the age range of 18 to 25 years. However, during fieldwork, respondents were only found within the age range of 18 to 23 years.

C. University Origin

The origin of the respondents from state universities in this study is categorized into five, namely:

- Universitas Sumatera Utara
- Politeknik Negeri Medan
- Politeknik Teknologi Kimia Industri
- Politeknik Negeri Kesehatan Medan
- Politeknik Negeri Media Kreatif

4.2. Data Analysis Method

4.2.1. Instrument Test

A. Validity Test

To determine the validity of each statement, it can be assessed through the r -value and the critical r -value at a significance level of 0.05, with degrees of freedom (df) = $n - 2 = 96 - 2 = 94$ for a two-way test at 0.200. In this research, the variables Conformity Consumption Behavior (10 statements), Product Attributes (10 statements), and Purchase Decisions (10 statements) are considered valid because the calculated r -value is greater than the critical r -value of 0.200.

B. Reliability Test

Table 1. Reliability Test Results

Reliability Statistic	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.857	10
.822	10
.821	10

According to the test results in the table, values above 0.60 are indicated. Wherein the instrument is declared reliable and suitable to be used as a variable in the research measurement.

4.2.2. Classical Assumption Test

A. Normality Test

Table 2. Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test Results (KS)

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnow Test		
		Unstandardized Residual
N		96
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	0E-7
	Std. Deviation	3,45917375
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	,075
	Positive	,058
	Negative	-,075
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		,740
Asymp. Sgn (2-tailed)		,644
a. Test distribution is Normal		
b. Calculated from data		

Based on Table 2, the value obtained through the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is 0.644. According to the stipulations, this value exceeds the specified threshold to be considered normally distributed, which is 0.05. Therefore, it can be stated that the data obtained in this study is normally distributed and fulfills the assumption of normality.

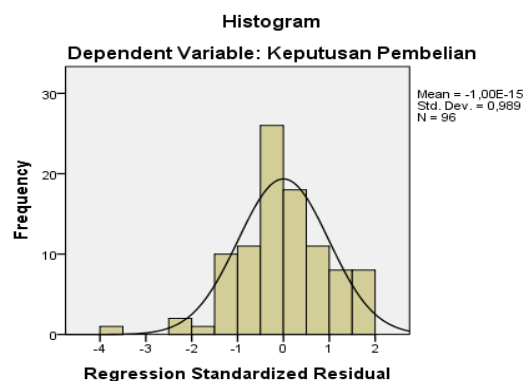


Figure 2. Histogram Graph

Based on the above Figure 2, it can be seen that the data is normally distributed, as evidenced by the bell-shaped histogram graph that does not significantly lean to the left or right. Generally, a histogram graph is considered normal when the data is spread around the diagonal line and follows the direction of the diagonal line or the histogram graph.

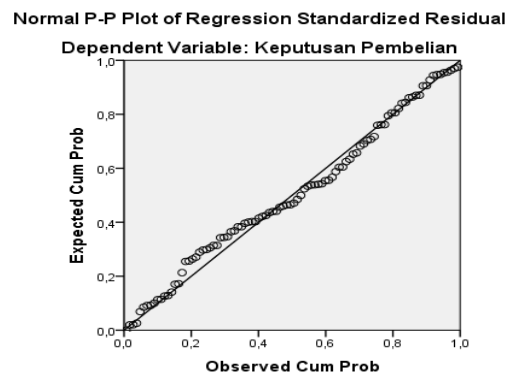


Figure 3. P-Plot Graph

Based on the data processing results, the P-Plot of the study presented in Figure 3 above indicates that the data distribution points follow and closely align with the diagonal line. It can be concluded that the probability plot or P-Plot used in this research is normally distributed.

4.2.3. Multicollinearity Test

Table 3. Multicollinearity Test Results

Coefficients ^a			
	Model	Collinearity Statistic	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	Constant		
	Conformity Consumption Behavior (X1)	.703	1.423
	Product Attribute (X2)	.703	1.423

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

Based on the above Table 3, it can be seen that the Tolerance values for the variables Conformity Consumption Behavior and Product Attributes are 0.703, which is > 0.10 , and the VIF value is 1.423, which is < 10.00 . From these results, it can be concluded that there is no multicollinearity issue, and the regression model is considered suitable and can be used for the regression equation.

4.2.4. Heteroscedasticity Test

Based on Figure 3 below, it can be observed that the data points are scattered uniformly and do not form a specific pattern. The data points are also spread above and below zero, indicating that the data is distributed randomly. This indicates that there is no heteroskedasticity issue in the regression model in this study.

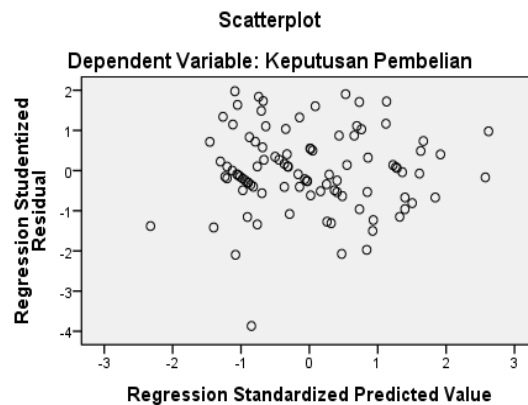


Figure 3. Heteroscedasticity Test Results

4.2.5. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Based on the results of the regression model test, the multiple linear regression analysis used in this study can be formulated as follows:

$$Y = a + b_1.x_1 + b_2.x_2$$

$$Y = 6,453 + 0,172 X_1 + 0,647 X_2$$

In multiple linear regression analysis, the constant value of 6.453 indicates that if the conformity consumption behavior variable (X1) and product attribute variable (X2) are both 0, the purchase decision will remain at 6.453.

Table 4. Partial Significance Test Results (T Test)

Model		Coefficients ^a			T	Sig
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	Constant	6,453	2,323		2,778	,007
	Conformity Consumption Behavior(X1)	,172	,067	,195	2,571	,012
	Product Attribute (X2)	,647	,073	,668	8,830	,000

Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

Table 5. Simultaneous Test Results (F Test)

Model		ANOVA ^a				
		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
	Regression	1901,981	2	950,990	77,803	,000b
1	Residual	1136,759	93	12,223		
	Total	3.038,740	95			

a. Dependent variable: Purchase Decision

b. Predictors: (Constant), Conformity Consumption Behavior, Product Attribute

Based on the data processing results in Table 5, it can be seen that the calculated F-value is 77.803, which is greater than 3.09 or, based on the significance value, $0.000 < 0.05$. This means that the independent variables X1 and X2 collectively and significantly influence the dependent variable Y. Hence, Ha3 is accepted.

Table 6. Coefficient of Determination Test Results (R^2)

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,791 ^a	,626	,618	3,496

a. Predictors: (Constant), Conformity Consumption Behavior, Product Attribute

b. Dependent variable: Purchase Decision

Based on the data processing results presented in Table 6, it is evident that the coefficient of correlation (R^2) is obtained at 0.791, indicating a relationship between X1 and X2 with Y at 79.1%, categorized as strong. Additionally, the Adjusted R Square value is 0.618, meaning that the influence of variables X1 and X2 on Y is 61.8%, while the remaining 38.2% is influenced by factors outside the scope of this study.

4.3. Discussion

4.3.1. Influence of Conformity Consumption Behavior (X1) on the Purchase Decision of Skincare Products

Based on the research conducted on students from state universities in Medan, it was found that in their lives, there is a small to moderate influence of conformity categorized by Martasari & Arisandy (2018) into normative and informative aspects. The most influential indicator in this study is the informative aspect, with a percentage of strongly agreeing at 10.4% and agreeing at 43.7%.

According to the data analysis results, there is an influence of conformity consumption behavior (X1) on the purchase decision (Y). The obtained t-value is 2.571 > 1.985 with a significance level of 0.012 < 0.05 and a regression coefficient value of 0.172. This indicates that conformity consumption behavior (X1) has a positive and significant influence on the purchase decision (Y). Based on these results, Ha1 is accepted, and H01 is rejected.

4.3.2. Influence of Product Attributes (X2) on the Purchase Decision of Skincare Products

The research on students from state universities in Medan shows that when deciding to purchase a product, there is a small to moderate level of efficiency or caution in considering product components. The study, using three indicators proposed by Kotler & Keller (2016) to measure product attributes (quality, features, and style/design), found that the most influential indicator is the features of the product, with a strongly agreeing percentage of 45.8% and agreeing at 27.1%.

The data analysis results indicate that the variable product attributes (X2) on the purchase decision (Y) have a t-value of 8.830 > 1.985 with a significance level of 0.000 < 0.05 and a regression coefficient value of 0.647. This shows that product attributes (X2) have a positive and significant influence on the purchase decision (Y). Based on these results, Ha2 is accepted, and H02 is rejected.

4.3.3. Influence of Conformity Consumption Behavior (X1) and Product Attributes (X2) on the Purchase Decision of Skincare Products

Combining the results, it is known that both conformity consumption behavior (X1) and product attributes (X2) together significantly influence the purchase decision (Y).

This is because conformity consumption behavior (X1) is considered capable of changing someone's attitudes, behaviors, and actions to influence their decisions. Additionally, the support of the completeness and availability of product attributes (X2) helps respondents choose and consider the products to be purchased.

The simultaneous hypothesis test results show a correlation coefficient (R) value of 0.791, indicating a strong relationship between conformity consumption behavior (X1) and product attributes (X2) on the purchase decision (Y) at 79.1%. The Adjusted R Square value of 0.626 or the coefficient of determination shows that conformity consumption behavior (X1) and product attributes (X2) on the purchase decision (Y) account for 62.6%, while the remaining 37.4% is influenced by factors outside this study.

5. CONCLUSION

The research findings yield three key conclusions. Firstly, Conformity Consumption Behavior (X1) exhibits a positive and statistically significant partial influence on Purchase Decisions (Y), thereby accepting Ha1 and rejecting H01. Secondly, Product Attributes (X2) independently demonstrate a positive and significant impact on purchase decisions (Y), leading to the acceptance of Ha2 and the rejection of H02. Thirdly, when considered together, Conformity Consumption Behavior (X1) and Product Attributes (X2) jointly exert a positive and significant influence on purchase decisions (Y), confirming the acceptance of Ha3 and the rejection of H03. In essence, this study underscores the pivotal roles played by both individual and combined factors of Conformity Consumption Behavior and Product Attributes in shaping decisions regarding the purchase of skincare products.

Drawing from the research outcomes, it is suggested that skincare product companies stay informed about dynamic skincare trends and devise sales strategies, particularly by offering bundled purchases. It is advisable for these companies to meticulously attend to all facets and values of their products, with a specific emphasis on attributes like the halal label and BPOM certification to augment consumer loyalty and satisfaction. Additionally, recognizing the study's limitation in its concentration on students from state universities in Medan using diverse skincare products, future research is encouraged to explore alternative variables and more specific product categories to expand the breadth of insights.

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