

# Determinants of Intention to Purchase a Controversial Halal Cosmetic: The Role of Perceived Expertise

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**Abstract:** This study investigates the link between perceived expertise, perceived risk, attitude, and purchase intention regarding a controversial halal cosmetic product. This study collected data from 128 Muslim participants who follow influencers discussing potential risks of a specific halal cosmetic brand on Instagram. A PLS-SEM approach was used to analyze the research model. This study revealed that perceived expertise and attitudes have a significant impact on the intention to purchase a controversial halal cosmetic. Interestingly, this study observed no significant connection between perceived risk and attitude or purchase intention. This suggests that when it comes to buying controversial halal cosmetics, consumers may not view perceived risk as a crucial factor. Instead, they seem to be more influenced by expert opinions. This study adds to the existing literature by exploring factors that influence the intention to purchase controversial halal cosmetics.

**Keywords:** perceived expertise; perceived risk; attitude; purchase intention; influencers; halal cosmetics

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## INTRODUCTION

The role of influencers to promote brands and products is significant in the current marketing practices. Influencers are people who established a large network of followers and are considered as trusted trendsetters in one or more niches (de Veirman et al., 2017). Influencers are considered micro-celebrities because they have a relatively high level of recognizability and utilize it for social influence and monetization; massive amounts of followers, active engagement, and brand or product endorsement (Jin et al., 2019). In short, influencers are those who have power to influence others, and it includes celebrities and experts as well.

In many cases, non-expert celebrity influencers might have conflicting opinions on specific brands or products with the experts one. When it happens, consumers' attitude and purchase behavior on the brands or products will be affected. This situation happened in the case of Helwa Beauty Care. It is one of the famous halal cosmetics brands in Indonesia endorsed by a celebrity, Kartika Putri. In 2021, a cosmetics expert in Indonesia named dr.

Richard Lee criticized the product as it contains a high dose of hydroquinone and mercury, which considers harmful and hazardous (CNN Indonesia, 2021). Afterwards, this issue created a series of intense debates involving non-experts and expert influencers. Hence, this case creates a controversy in the public, thus may give negative perception of the brand and will eventually affect risk perception and intention to purchase the product.

Purchase intention is a consumer's tendency whether to buy or not to buy a product (Ajzen, 1991). In the consumer behavior model, purchase intention is formed by consumer perceptions and attitudes (Aufi & Mustiko Aji, 2021; Olson & Peter, 2000; Ajzen, 1991). Therefore, considering theoretical background and previous empirical findings, this study considers three determinants of intention to purchase controversial halal cosmetics: perceived experts, perceived risk, and attitude.

The first determinant of intention to purchase controversial halal cosmetics is perceived expertise. Expertise can be defined as the degree to which the communicator is regarded as a source of valid statements about the object. This points to an endorser's skills, knowledge, or experience (Deshbhag & Mohan, 2020; Erdogan, 1999). Expertise is determined by how the target audience perceives the endorser (Deshbhag & Mohan, 2020). Meanwhile, an expert refers to a person who has significant experience and knowledge about a product (Rahmi et al., 2017; Pornpitakpan, 2003). An expert also refers to a person who is well-educated and can be "*the source of making valid assertions*" (Wong et al., 2020).

Perceived expertise has been investigated previously in numerous consumer behavior studies (Wong et al, 2020; Chetioui et al., 2020; Rahmi et al., 2017; Seiler & Kueza, 2017). Wong et al. (2020) demonstrated that perceived expertise had a positive effect on attitude. Chetioui et al. (2020) reported that perceived expertise is positively associated with the consumer's attitude. The effect of perceived expertise on purchase intention has conflicting findings in the literature. For instance, in the context of the beauty vlog clips on YouTube, Rahmi et al. (2017) revealed the insignificantly connection between perceived expertise and purchase intention, But, in other context, Seiler & Kucza (2017) reported a significant connection between perceived expertise and purchase intention. Therefore, it would be beneficial to conduct a future study to examine how perceived expertise influences not only attitude, but also purchase intention (Wong et al., 2020).

The second determinant of intention to purchase controversial halal cosmetics is perceived risk. Perceived risk is an expectation of the disadvantages (Kamalul Ariffin et al., 2018; Schierz et al., 2010). It is defined as the nature and degree of unpredictability experienced by a buyer when contemplating a particular purchase (Kamalul Ariffin et al., 2018; Biswas et al., 2006). Previous studies have found that perceived risk significantly affect attitude and purchase intention not only in the online environments (Kamalul Ariffin et al., 2018; Risque & Almousa, 2011) but also in non-online environments (Gan & Wang, 2017; Alcántara-Pilar et al., 2017; Deshbhag & Mohan, 2020).

The third determinant of intention to purchase controversial halal cosmetics is attitude. Attitude is a consumer's overall evaluation of a product or service, based on their thoughts and feelings (Kirmani and Campbell, 2009). It can also be associated with an emotional response, such as liking or disliking the product (Mackenzie and Lutz, 1989). Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) asserts that there is a positive impact between

customer's attitude and intention to buy a product (Ajzen, 1991). The stronger the attitude, the stronger the intention will take place, and thus the purchase decision behavior will reflect (Briliana & Mursito, 2017). Empirical connection between attitudes and purchase intention has been widely examined in consumer behavior literature. For instance, in the context of halal logo (Rizkitysha & Hananto, 2020) and halal cosmetics (Suparno, 2020; Briliana & Mursito (2017)).

This study identifies that even though numerous studies have investigated the relationship between perceived expertise, risk, attitude and purchase intention, their findings seem to be inconsistent. Besides, these variables have not previously been investigated in the context of controversial halal cosmetics, and in a situation when non-expert and expert influencers have conflicting opinions on a brand. Hence, it is necessary to re-investigate the connection between perceived expertise, risk, attitude, and purchase intention in such settings.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Theory of Reasoned Action**

This study uses the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) to explain why people behave the way they do. The TRA says that people's intentions, attitudes, and beliefs about what others think they should do (subjective norm) all influence their behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1975; Becker & Gibson, 1998). The TRA has been extended into the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which adds in a fourth factor: perceived behavioral control. This is how much people believe they are able to control their own behavior (Ajzen, 1991). The most important part of the TPB is a person's intention to perform a certain behavior. Intentions are how hard people are willing to try to do something, and how much effort they are willing to put in (Ajzen, 1991). In general, the stronger a person's intention, the more likely they are to actually do the behavior. However, it's important to note that people can only act on their intentions if they have voluntary control over the behavior in question. For example, people may have the intention to quit smoking, but they may not be able to do so if they are addicted to nicotine (Ajzen, 1991).

### **Perceived Expertise on Attitude Towards Halal Cosmetics**

Consumers' perception of an influencer's expertise is an important factor in how they view the influencer and decide whether to make a purchase (Chetioui et al., 2020). When consumers see an influencer as knowledgeable in their field, they tend to trust the content and recommendations coming from that influencer (Chetioui et al., 2020; Yadav et al., 2013). Many studies have shown that professional influencers have a significant impact on how consumers feel about a specific brand (Chetioui et al., 2020; Hayes & Carr, 2015; Bergkvist et al., 2015). When consumers believe an influencer is an expert, it increases their trust, which in turn affects their attitudes and their likelihood to buy (Chetioui et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2005). Wong et al. (2020) also found that expertise plays a role in shaping attitudes and intentions, which is relevant to this study.

All these previous studies agree that perceived expertise influences how consumers feel, especially when it comes to influencers and experts who consumers trust to provide

information about products or brands. This study focuses on how consumers' perception of expertise impacts their attitudes toward controversial halal cosmetics. So, when consumers see an influencer as highly knowledgeable, their attitude towards controversial halal cosmetics is likely to be more positive. This leads us to propose Hypothesis 1:

**H1:** Perceived expertise has a positive effect on attitudes toward controversial halal cosmetics.

### **Perceived Expertise on Perceived Risk**

Expertise means having knowledge and experience in a specific area (Biswas et al., 2006). In most advertisements, the goal is to convey certain messages or viewpoints related to a brand or issue to encourage people to try the brand or use it repeatedly. When an expert endorses a product, he/she tends to make people more receptive to the messages being conveyed (Biswas et al., 2006).

According to Deshbhag & Mohan (2020), while many studies have explored celebrity endorsements, some important factors have been missing in previous research. These factors include how credible, knowledgeable, and attractive the celebrity endorser is, and how they affect consumers' perceptions (Deshbhag & Mohan, 2020; Gupta et al., 2015). Deshbhag & Mohan (2020) conducted research to show how these credibility traits of influencers influence consumers' perception of risk. The study found that expertise had an impact on how consumers perceived risk, meaning that there was a significant connection between expertise and perceived risk.

Previous studies have also shown that perceived expertise can affect how much risk consumers perceive. When a product or brand is endorsed by someone seen as an expert, it can reduce the perceived risk compared to when it's endorsed by someone without expertise (Biswas et al., 2006). In the context of this study, it's likely that perceived risk is closely tied to how much expertise consumers believe influencers have when it comes to controversial halal cosmetics. As a result, it's possible that consumers may trust and be more willing to use controversial halal cosmetics when they are promoted by influencers who are perceived as knowledgeable. Based on these reasons, we propose Hypothesis 2:

**H2:** Perceived expertise has a negative effect on perceived risk of controversial halal cosmetics.

### **Perceived Expertise to Purchase Intention**

Consumers tend to trust and value the opinions of experts in their respective fields (Chetioui et al., 2020). Experts are seen as highly qualified and likely to provide accurate and reliable advice (Chetioui et al., 2020). According to Ohanian (1990), expertise is defined as how much people see a communicator as a source of trustworthy and valid information.

Seiler & Kucza (2017) found that perceived expertise had a positive influence on the intention to make a purchase. However, a study by Wong et al. (2020) found something interesting. They discovered that when it came to seeking advice on choosing a university, the link between perceived expertise and the intention to take advice was not supported. In other words, people didn't necessarily follow the advice of perceived experts. This finding aligns with research by Rahmi et al. (2017), which showed that consumers' perception of a

vlogger's expertise didn't impact their intention to make a purchase. Both studies together suggest that perceived expertise didn't play a role in influencing people's intentions.

This current study builds upon the findings of Seiler & Kucza (2017) in the context of controversial halal cosmetics. This suggests that if consumers believe the influencers endorsing controversial halal cosmetics are knowledgeable, they are more likely to have intention to buy the product. Therefore, this study proposes Hypothesis 3:

**H3:** Perceived expertise has a positive effect on intention to purchase controversial halal cosmetics.

### **Perceived Risk on Attitude Towards Halal Cosmetics**

Perceived risk refers to how individuals see the uncertainty and potential downsides when they decide to buy a product or service (Kamalul Ariffin et al., 2018; Ko et al., 2004). Think of it like making a prediction about potential losses (Kamalul Ariffin et al., 2018). Mostafa & Elseidi (2018) pointed out that consumers feel uneasy when they can't predict the outcome of their actions, which is a common experience when facing risk. Mostafa & Elseidi (2018) also noted that when people perceive lower risk in a private label brand, they tend to have a more favorable attitude toward that brand.

Previous research has shown that perceived risk has a negative impact on how consumers view private label brand products (Mostafa & Elseidi, 2018). Similarly, Alcántara-Pilar et al. (2017) found that British users' perception of risk had a negative effect on their attitude toward a website. Applying these findings to the current study on controversial halal cosmetics, it's likely that consumers' perception of risk will also negatively affect their attitude toward these products. In simple terms, the less risk they feel, the more positive their attitude is likely to be toward controversial halal cosmetics. Therefore, this study proposes hypothesis 4:

**H4:** Perceived risk has a negative effect on attitude toward controversial halal cosmetics.

### **Perceived Risk on Purchase Intention**

Perceived risk has two parts: uncertainty, which is the likelihood of bad outcomes, and consequences, which are the extent of the losses (Kamalul Ariffin et al., 2018; Laroche et al., 2005; Bauer, 1960). Perceived risk has been a significant predictor of purchase intention in numerous research settings. In Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) context, Deshbhag & Mohan (2020) revealed that consumers want to buy FMGC products when they perceived less risk or the products. However, in a social commerce context, a study reported an insignificant association between perceived risk and purchase intention (Gan & Wang, 2017).

While there are differences among these previous studies, the present research considers the findings of Deshbhag & Mohan (2020) and Kamalul Ariffin et al. (2018) and adapts their theoretical framework to the context of controversial halal cosmetics. Importantly, this study argues that consumers' perceived risk has a negative impact on their intention to purchase controversial halal cosmetics. In simple terms, the more customers perceive the risk, the less likely they are to want to buy controversial halal cosmetics. Therefore, this study proposes Hypothesis 5:

**H5:** Perceived risk has a negative effect on intention to purchase controversial halal cosmetics.

### **Attitude Towards Halal cosmetics to Purchase Intention**

Attitudes are essentially how a person feels and evaluates something, whether it's a person, place, issue, or behavior (Wong et al., 2020; Ajzen, 1991). Attitude is not only a strong predictor of what someone intends to do but also plays a role in shaping that intention (Wong et al., 2020; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). According to the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), when consumers have a positive attitude toward a product, it increases their intention to buy it (Madden et al., 1992). In other words, the more they like something, the more they want to buy it, and these decisions go hand in hand (Briliana & Mursito, 2017; Ajzen, 2008).

A study by Suparno (2020) showed a positive connection between cognitive attitude (how you think about something) and affective attitude (how you feel about something) when it comes to the intention to buy halal cosmetics online. This aligns with Briliana & Mursito's (2017) study. Additionally, as Chetioui et al. (2020) pointed out, both the consumer's attitude and the brand's attitude significantly and positively influence the consumer's intention to purchase. Furthermore, this study extends previous findings to current study context. When it comes to buying controversial halal cosmetics, a customer's intention can be strongly influenced by their attitude towards these products. Since halal cosmetics cater to potential Muslim customers, their attitude towards both the products and the brand is likely to be positive. When consumers have a favorable opinion of halal cosmetics, including the controversial one, they are more likely to buy them.

**H6:** Attitude toward controversial halal cosmetics has a positive effect on an intention to purchase them.

## **METHOD**

### **Research Design**

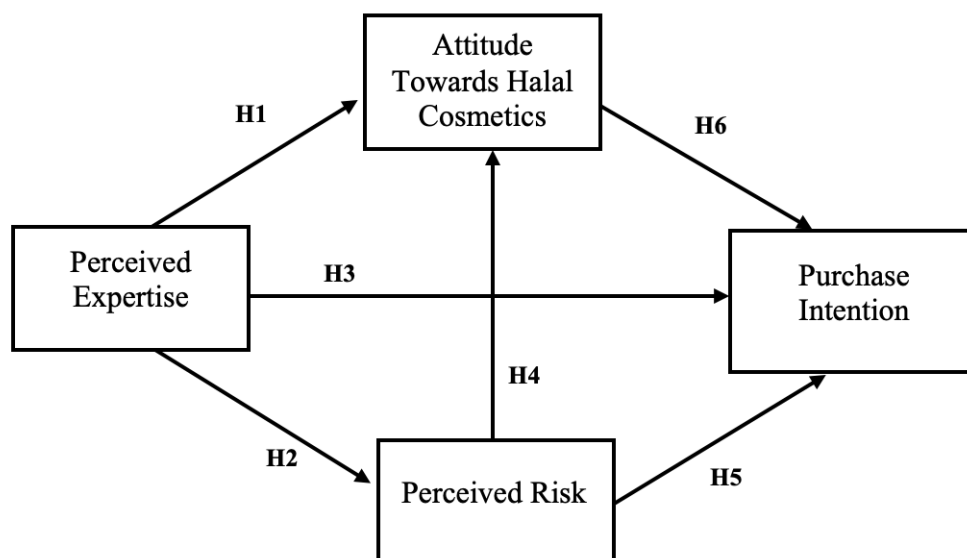
This study used a quantitative approach. The data was collected from a survey questionnaire. Due to the pandemic, this study did a survey online using Google Forms. The questionnaire had questions with five possible responses, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (rated as 1) to "Strongly Agree" (rated as 5). It was distributed on different social media platforms like WhatsApp, Line, and Instagram. To choose the respondents, this study used purposive or judgment sampling technique. This method is often used when the exact size of the population is unknown (Schindler, 2018). This study set two criteria of respondents: Muslims and followed Kartika Putri and dr. Richard Lee on Instagram.

### **Measurements**

This study measured all the variables using methods borrowed from previous research. To gauge perceived expertise, this study used questions from Chetioui et al. (2020) and Wong et al. (2020). For example, respondents were asked to rate statements like, "*The influencers I follow are experts in the field of cosmetics*" and "*The influencers I follow have a deep knowledge of cosmetics.*" Perceived risk was assessed with items

adapted from Mostafa & Elseidi (2018) and Gan & Wang (2017). These items included statements like, "I have concerns that the ingredients in halal cosmetics promoted by influencers may not actually be halal" to measure how people view potential risks. This study measured attitude using questions inspired by Briliana & Mursito (2017). They were prompted to rate statements such as, "I have a positive attitude towards halal cosmetics endorsed by influencers" and "I actively seek out halal cosmetics endorsed by influencers who are experts in the field." Lastly, to gauge purchase intention, this study used items adapted from Briliana & Mursito (2017) and Gan & Wang (2017). Questions included statements like, "I am willing to pay more for halal cosmetics promoted by influencers" and "I am willing to wait longer to purchase halal cosmetics endorsed by influencers." The proposed research model can be seen in Figure 1.

**Figure 1:** Research Model



### Data Analysis

This study used Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach to analyze the data. PLS-SEM enables the researchers to simultaneously examine and estimate a series of relationships between different variables, including both independent and dependent variables (Hair et al., 2019). According to Hair et al. (2019), the main goal of PLS-SEM is to predict and explain as much of the variation in the dependent variable as possible. PLS-SEM focuses on explaining the variation in dependent or endogenous constructs. The analysis involves two main models: the outer model and the inner model. The outer model consists of all items measured in the study. On the other hand, the inner model, also known as the structural model, focuses on measuring the relationships between the latent variables (Hair et al., 2019).

For the outer model, this study assessed its quality using indicators like Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Square Roots AVE, Cross Loadings, Cronbach Alpha (CA), and Composite Reliability (CR). These indicators help ensure that our measurements are

accurate and reliable. And for the inner model, this study checked its suitability using the PLS bootstrapping method, which relies on values like t-values and R-square (R2).

## RESULT

### Respondent Profile

This study gathered responses from a total of 128 participants. As shown in Table 1, a significant majority of the respondents identified as female, making up 75% of the total respondents (96 out of 128). When it comes to age, most respondents fell into the 21-30 years old category, totaling 112 respondents or 87.5%. In terms of marital status, 100 respondents reported being single, representing 78.13% of the sample, while the remaining 28 were married, accounting for 21.88%. Monthly income levels varied, with 56 respondents (43.75%) earning less than 2 million rupiah, 40 respondents (31.25%) earning between 2 million and 3.9 million rupiah, 21 respondents (16.41%) earning between 4 million and 5.9 million rupiah, and 11 participants (8.58%) earning more than 6 million rupiah.

**Table 1:** Respondent Profiles

Category	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
• Male	32	25%
• Female	96	75%
<b>Age</b>		
• < 20 years old	3	2.34%
• 21 – 30 years old	112	87.5%
• 31 – 40 years old	10	7.81%
• 41 – 50 years old	1	0.78%
• > 50 years old	2	1.56%
<b>Marital Status</b>		
• Single	100	78.13%
• Married	28	21.88%
<b>Monthly Income</b>		
• < 2 Million IDR	56	43.75%
• 2 Million IDR – 3.9 Million IDR	40	31.25%
• 4 Million IDR – 5.9 Million IDR	21	16.41%
• > 6 Million IDR	11	8.59%



Category	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Education</b>		
• Senior High School degree	49	38.28%
• Diploma degree	1	0.78%
• Undergraduate degree	73	57.03%
• Master degree	4	3.13%
• Doctoral degree	1	0.78%
<b>Origin</b>		
• Sumatra Island and surrounding	26	20.31%
• Java Island and surrounding	96	75%
• Kalimantan Island and surrounding	6	4.69%
<b>Frequency of Using Social Media per day</b>		
• < 1 hour	1	0.78%
• 2 – 3 hours	20	15.63%
• 4 – 5 hours	46	35.94%
• > 6 hours	61	47.66%

Source: Authors

In terms of education, the majority of respondents held undergraduate degrees, totaling 73 respondents (57.03%), followed by 49 respondents (38.28%) with a senior high school education. Geographically, most respondents were from Java Island, comprising 75% of the sample, while the rest were from Sumatra Island (20.31%) and Kalimantan Island (4.69%). This diverse geographical distribution reflects a wide range of origins among the respondents.

Regarding social media usage, 61 respondents (47.66%) reported using social media for more than 6 hours a day, followed by 46 respondents (35.94%) who spent 4 to 5 hours on social media daily. Another 20 respondents (15.63%) used social media for 2 to 3 hours a day, and only one respondent used social media for less than an hour daily. These findings indicate that a significant portion of the respondents integrated social media into their daily routines.

### Measurement Model Test

In the measurement model, validity and reliability test are assessed. There are two types of validity tests performed: convergence and discriminant validity tests. Convergent validity is indicated when the factor loading value is at least 0.5 to 0.7 (Hair et al., 2019). Each of these tests has a specific approach and goal. Convergent validity is assessed by

looking at outer loading values and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), while discriminant validity is evaluated by comparing the square root of AVE using Fornell-Lacker's approach. To achieve good results, AVE should be greater than 0.5, outer loading should be greater than 0.5, and the square root of AVE should be greater than the correlation score with other variables (Hair et al., 2019).

**Table 2:** Convergence Validity Test

	<b>Loadings</b>	<b>AVE</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Composite Reliability</b>
<b>ATT1</b>	0.794	0.608	0.783	0.859
<b>ATT2</b>	0.877			
<b>ATT3</b>	0.584			
<b>ATT4</b>	0.831			
<b>PE1</b>	0.866	0.538	0.777	0.848
<b>PE2</b>	0.785			
<b>PE3</b>	0.867			
<b>PE4</b>	0.505			
<b>PE5</b>	0.564			
<b>PI1</b>	0.897	0.723	0.923	0.940
<b>PI2</b>	0.866			
<b>PI3</b>	0.745			
<b>PI4</b>	0.864			
<b>PI5</b>	0.884			
<b>PI6</b>	0.838			
<b>PR1</b>	0.839	0.783	0.954	0.962
<b>PR2</b>	0.897			
<b>PR3</b>	0.856			
<b>PR4</b>	0.901			
<b>PR5</b>	0.886			
<b>PR6</b>	0.914			
<b>PR7</b>	0.901			

Table 2 presents the results of the outer loading values. Based on the calculations, all items have outer loading values greater than 0.5 (Hair et al., 2019). Therefore, this study

considers all the research items to be valid. This suggests that our model doesn't have issues with convergent validity, and there's no need to exclude any items since none of the variable results fall below 0.5. Table 2 also displays the AVE scores in which none of the variables have an AVE score below 0.50. This indicates that the measurement model in the present study is free from error variance due to measurement or item errors.

Additionally, Table 2 includes the Cronbach Alpha (CA) values for each variable, which determine their reliability. All variables meet the requirement of having a CA value above 0.70, making them reliable. Specifically, the CA values for attitude (0.783), perceived expertise (0.777), purchase intention (0.923), and perceived risk (0.954) all exceed 0.70. Similarly, the Composite Reliability (CR) values also meet the standard requirement ( $CR \geq 0.70$ ). The CR scores for attitudes (0.859), perceived expertise (0.848), purchase intention (0.940), and perceived risk (0.962) all surpass 0.70. Therefore, all the items have proven to be reliable and have passed the reliability test.

**Table 3:** Discriminant Validity Test

	<b>Attitude</b>	<b>Perceived Expertise</b>	<b>Purchase Intention</b>	<b>Perceived Risk</b>
Attitude	0.780			
Perceived Expertise	0.721	0.733		
Purchase Intention	0.770	0.674	0.850	
Perceived Risk	-0.466	-0.471	-0.501	0.885

Table 3 presents the variable scores for the square root AVE using Fornell Lacker's approach (Schindler, 2018). To assess the quality of these scores, the square root AVE score should be greater than the correlation score with other variables (Hair et al., 2019). Specifically, this study found that the attitude score (0.780) is higher than the scores for perceived expertise (0.721), purchase intention (0.770), and perceived risk (-0.466). Perceived expertise (0.733) has a higher score than purchase intention (0.674) and perceived risk (-0.471). Purchase intention (0.850) surpasses perceived risk (-0.501). For perceived risk (0.885), there are no other variables beneath it that exceed its value. These research findings indicate that each variable effectively captures a unique aspect, and there is no redundancy in our measurements. In simpler terms, each variable provides distinct information, and none of them overlap with each other.

### Structural Model Test

The structural model is calculated by implementing bootstrapping technique. The significance of the hypotheses test is measured by t-statistic value (t-value) and p-value. It is considered significant if t-value is higher than 1.96 ( $t > 1.96$ ) and p-value is less than 0.05 ( $p < 0.05$ ). Furthermore, path coefficient also can denote the direction of its significant relationship, whether it is negative or positive by considering the value of original sample.

**Table 4:** Hypotheses Testing

	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values	Result
PE → ATT	0.645	8.079	0.000	H1 is supported
PE → PR	-0.471	8.019	0.000	H2 is supported
PE → PI	0.207	2.157	0.031	H3 is supported
PR → ATT	-0.163	1.899	0.058	H4 is unsupported
PR → PI	-0.146	1.774	0.077	H5 is unsupported
ATT → PI	0.553	5.937	0.000	H6 is supported

Note: PE=Perceived Expertise, PR=Perceived Risk, ATT=Attitude, PI=Purchase Intention

Table 4 demonstrates that most of the hypotheses are supported. For instance, the relationship between perceived expertise and attitudes is significant as the t-statistics (8.079) is greater than 1.96 and its p-value is less than 0.01. Therefore, H1 is supported. Similar results can be found in the relationship between perceived expertise and perceived risk (t-statistics = 8.019; p-value = 0.00), perceived expertise and purchase intention (t-statistics = 2.157; p-value = 0.03), and attitude and purchase intention (t-statistics = 5.937; p-value = 0.00). These findings provide support for H2, H3 and H6. On the other hand, the results in this study also revealed two unsupported relationships: H4 and H5.

## DISCUSSION

The relationship between perceived expertise and attitude towards controversial halal cosmetics shows a strong and positive influence. This means that perceived influencer expertise significantly impacts Muslim consumers' attitude toward controversial halal cosmetics. This finding aligns with previous research that explored the impact of perceived expertise on attitude. As mentioned in a study by Chetioui et al. (2020), professional influencers can have a substantial effect on consumers' attitudes toward a specific brand. Chetioui et al. (2020) also emphasized that consumers tend to trust content and recommendations from influencers perceived as experts in their respective fields, such as the field of halal cosmetics. Another study by Wong et al. (2020) also acknowledged the relevance of expertise in the context of attitudes and intentions. When an influencer is perceived as an expert, it boosts the level of trust among customers, ultimately influencing their attitudes and purchase intentions (Chetioui et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2005).

Looking at the demographics of the respondents, it's notable that most cosmetics users are female, accounting for 75% of the total respondents. Furthermore, a significant portion of respondents falls within the age group of 21-30 years old, constituting 87.5% of the sample. This age group is more likely to have access to and engage with influencers and experts on social media. Consequently, they may form specific attitudes towards halal cosmetics based on the guidance and information provided by influencers perceived as experts.

Furthermore, this study demonstrates a significant negative connection between perceived expertise and perceived risk. In simpler terms, when a consumer perceives an

influencer or expert as highly knowledgeable in a specific field, he/she tends to reduce their perception of risk associated with controversial halal cosmetics. The significant path between perceived expertise and risk are consistent with earlier research conducted by Deshbhag & Mohan (2020) and Biswas et al. (2006). Biswas et al. (2006) further noted that an endorsement by an expert is more effective to reduce perceived risk compared to an endorsement by a non-expert.

Moreover, this study shows that perceived expertise encourages consumers' intention to purchase controversial halal cosmetics. This finding provides an empirical support for Seiler & Kucza (2017). However, to some extent, this finding contradicts the study of Wong et al. (2020) and Rahmi et al. (2017). The differences in findings might be due to the specific context of each study.

This study discovered that the link between consumers' perceived risk and their attitude toward controversial halal cosmetics is not significant. This goes against what previous research (Mostafa & Elseidi, 2018; Alcántara-Pilar et al., 2017) has found and may seem unexpected because, logically, if consumers see a product as risky, they should have a less favorable opinion of it.

However, in this case, the authors suggest that the consumers in this study, who are all Muslims, may not view halal cosmetics, even controversial ones, as risky. They might have a subjective belief that all halal products are safe, influenced by their religious beliefs. This religious bias also plays a role in explaining the insignificant connection between perceived risk and purchase intention of controversial halal cosmetics. Interestingly, this study shows that Muslim consumers' perception of risk regarding controversial halal cosmetics might be influenced by experts' opinions. Experts have more knowledge about cosmetics than consumers do, and this is supported by the significant negative connection found between perceived expertise and perceived risk. In simpler terms, when consumers trust experts in the field, they might not see as much risk in controversial halal cosmetics.

## CONCLUSION

This study aims to investigate determinants of purchase intention of controversial halal cosmetics in Indonesia. Based on the result and discussion, it can be concluded that Muslim consumers do not associate intention to purchase controversial halal cosmetics with perception of risk due to religious bias. However, Muslim consumers may reconsider to purchase controversial halal cosmetics after listening to experts' opinions.

## Limitation

This research study has few limitations related to the proportion of respondents. The distribution of the questionnaires in this study seem to be unbalanced as the majority of respondents came from Java Island (75%). The proportion of respondents between the ages of 21 and 30 dominates the sample (87.5%). Thus, in terms of gender, female is dominant (75%). This dominating phenomenon can lead to biased result. Based on this limitation, therefore, this study suggests future studies to consider balance proportion of respondents in terms of geographical locations, age, and gender to avoid bias in interpreting research findings. Besides, this also suggests future studies on controversial halal cosmetics to

measure religiosity and religious bias.

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