

Halal Lifestyle and Consumer Decisions: The Role of Halal Labels, Religious Values, and Word of Mouth in Purchasing Wardah Cosmetics at Islamic Boarding Schools

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Abstract

The domestic cosmetic industry in Indonesia continues to experience steady growth, driven by increasing market demand and evolving beauty trends. This demand is fueled by consumer interest in multifunctional cosmetic products. This study examines the influence of product attributes, halal labels, religiosity, and word of mouth (WOM) on purchasing decisions for Wardah cosmetics among female students at an Islamic boarding school in Kalibebler, Mojotengah, Wonosobo. Using a quantitative approach and linear regression analysis, data were collected from 100 respondents selected through random sampling. The results indicate that all four factors significantly impact purchasing decisions. Product attributes positively affect consumer choices, highlighting the importance of quality, design, and features. Halal labels play a crucial role in building trust and ensuring compliance with Islamic principles. Religiosity strongly influences decision-making, as students prioritize products aligned with their faith. WOM also significantly impacts purchasing behavior, especially within close-knit communities. Collectively, these variables explain 50% of the variance in purchasing decisions. The findings emphasize the need for manufacturers to focus on product development, clear halal certification, and strategies that encourage positive WOM to enhance consumer trust and brand loyalty in religiously conscious markets.

Keywords: Halal labels; Product Attributes; Purchase Decisions; Religiosity; Word of Mouth (WOM).

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Introduction

The cosmetic industry in Indonesia has experienced remarkable expansion and transformation, particularly in the past decade. One of the most notable indicators of this growth is the sharp increase in the number of cosmetic companies—from just 153 in 2017 to 760 in 2018 (Ardiantono et al., 2022; Letsoin & Riorini, 2023). This boom is largely driven by rising consumer demand across a broader demographic spectrum that now includes not only women, but also men and children (Rachmawati, Amalia, and Rachmawati, 2022). The proliferation of local cosmetic brands has intensified competition between domestic and foreign products, especially as evolving consumer preferences continue to shape the market landscape (Ariyono, 2023; Suwandi & Balqiah, 2023).

A notable trend in the industry is the increasing demand for halal-certified cosmetics, reflecting the religious values of Indonesia's predominantly Muslim population and a growing awareness of product content and ethical manufacturing (Isa et al., 2023). This shift has opened significant market potential for Shariah-compliant cosmetic products that align with consumer beliefs and obligations (Pujiastuti et al., 2022). Moreover, the engagement of beauty bloggers and digital influencers plays a crucial role in shaping consumer purchasing decisions, particularly in the halal segment, amplifying the impact of digital marketing on consumer behavior (Putri and Abdinagoro, 2018).

The sector also reflects broader national trends in science, health, and traditional medicine, with many cosmetic products incorporating both modern innovations and Indonesia's rich cultural heritage (Soraya and Marlyna, 2021). As Indonesia progresses toward Industry 4.0, digitalization and enhanced connectivity are expected to further impact the cosmetics industry, particularly in areas such as supply chain management, product innovation, and marketing efficiency (Purwanto et al., 2022). These developments signal that Indonesia's cosmetic industry is undergoing dynamic transformation driven by demographic expansion, consumer trends, digital engagement, and shifting cultural values. The industry presents significant opportunities—particularly in halal and sustainable product development—and must continue adapting to evolving market demands while leveraging technological advancements to sustain its momentum.

Cosmetics are widely used by women to fulfill their basic beauty and personal care needs. One of the most popular cosmetic brands in Indonesia today is Wardah, a local brand founded in 1995 by Nurhayati Subakat under the company PT Paragon

Technology & Innovation (PTI) (Kristianti & Margarita, 2021; Maghfiroh & Indrarini, 2022). Starting as a home industry in the Cibodas area of West Java, Wardah has grown into a nationally recognized brand. Its products are formulated to meet the skincare needs of teenage and adult women with various skin types, including dull, dry, and sensitive skin.

Wardah cosmetics are designed to keep pace with current beauty trends, using high-quality natural ingredients while avoiding substances that may pose health risks to the skin or body. Wardah is a pioneer in halal cosmetics in Indonesia, holding halal certification (Certificate No. 00150010680899), with its ingredients verified as halal by the Indonesian Food and Drug Authority (BPOM) and the Indonesian Council of Ulama's Institute for the Assessment of Food, Drugs, and Cosmetics (LPPOM MUI) (Nurdin and Setiani, 2021). The MUI halal logo is prominently displayed on all product packaging as an assurance of the product's compliance with Islamic dietary and ethical standards.

The growing number of illegal and uncertified cosmetic products circulating in the market has led consumers—particularly at the Kalibeber Village Islamic Boarding School in Mojotengah District, Wonosobo Regency—to be increasingly cautious (*wara'*) in selecting cosmetics. The students' awareness of the importance of halal products stems from their religious education and understanding of halal certification. As a result, they actively evaluate Wardah products before making any purchasing decisions.

The process through which consumers choose and purchase products is known as the purchasing decision process (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008). In the context of this study, the decision to purchase Wardah cosmetics among students at the Kalibeber Islamic Boarding School begins with an awareness of their personal needs. This decision-making process is influenced by various factors, including cultural, social, personal, and psychological aspects.

Before making a purchase, Wardah consumers at the Kalibeber Islamic Boarding School identify specific needs—when cosmetics become a necessity, they are considered essential purchases. These consumers routinely evaluate product options based on prior use, personal preferences, and available alternatives.

In addition to assessing product attributes, these consumers pay close attention to the halal label and actively seek information to ensure the products they use are both safe and compliant with Islamic principles. Halal-certified cosmetics meet strict standards of hygiene and safety, having undergone thorough inspections and being

free from substances prohibited in Islam. Consumers at the Kalibeber Islamic Boarding School seek out information about Wardah products and evaluate their suitability before making purchasing decisions. This behavior aligns with the consumer decision-making model proposed by Kotler and Keller (2007), which describes the purchasing decision as a sequence of steps consumers follow to make buying choices. Several variables influence these decisions, including product attributes, halal certification, religiosity, and word of mouth (WOM).

Therefore, the aim of this study is to examine the influence of product attributes, halal labels, religiosity, and word of mouth on the purchasing decisions of Wardah cosmetic products among female students (santri) at the Kalibeber Islamic Boarding School in Mojotengah District, Wonosobo Regency.

Literature Review

Purchase Decision

Consumer decision-making begins with the recognition of a need or desire. Purchasing decisions are influenced by various internal and external factors, and during this process, consumers seek out information that may affect their choices. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2008), consumer purchasing decisions involve a series of steps through which individuals evaluate and ultimately decide to buy a product.

Purchasing decisions reflect consumer behavior in selecting and committing to a specific product or service. This process involves evaluating multiple alternatives before arriving at a final decision. Kotler and Armstrong (2008) emphasize that a purchasing decision is not a single action, but rather a combination of several interrelated decisions that collectively lead to the act of buying. These decisions may include brand selection, product attributes, payment methods, and timing, all of which are shaped by personal, social, cultural, and psychological factors.

Product Attributes

According to Tjiptono (as cited in Suswardji, 2012), product attributes refer to the elements inherent in a product that are visible to consumers and serve as the primary basis for making purchasing decisions. Gitosudarmo (2008) explains that product attributes are the characteristics of a product that ensure it meets the needs and desires of buyers. In this context, product attributes become a critical component of competitive marketing strategies. Businesses must carefully develop

unique combinations of product attributes to attract consumer interest and differentiate their offerings from competitors (Amrillah and Brawijaya, 2016).

Tjiptono (2008) identifies several types of product attributes, including brand, packaging, and labeling. The brand refers to the name or symbol assigned to a product, used to distinguish it from competing products. Packaging is the external wrapper that protects and presents the product in a form suitable for consumption or use. Labeling involves the textual or visual information provided about the product or its manufacturer, often integrated into the packaging. The label plays a role in branding and provides essential identification and informational functions (Suswardji, 2012).

The presence of unique and well-developed product attributes can significantly influence consumer interest by distinguishing one product from another. Such differentiation is crucial in competitive markets, where product attributes serve not only functional purposes but also fulfill psychological needs. Therefore, understanding the extent to which product attributes impact consumer behavior is vital for marketers seeking to design effective strategies that influence purchasing decisions. Based on this theoretical foundation, the following research hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Product attributes have a positive effect on purchasing decisions for Wardah cosmetic products.

Halal Label

A halal label refers to the inclusion of a written statement or symbol on product packaging indicating that the product is halal, meaning it complies with Islamic dietary and ethical guidelines (Rangkuti, 2010). This label may only be applied once the product has obtained halal certification from the Indonesian Ulema Council's Assessment Institute for Foods, Drugs, and Cosmetics (LPPOM MUI). The halal certificate is a formal fatwa issued by the MUI confirming that the product's ingredients and production processes meet Islamic legal standards. For Muslim consumers, the presence of a halal label on cosmetic products is highly significant, as it assures them that the product is free from substances that are harmful or prohibited in Islam.

The halal label serves as an important point of reference for Muslim consumers, signaling that the product is safe and permissible. Consumers believe that products with halal certification do not contain forbidden elements, whether in the form of

raw materials, additives, or other auxiliary substances used in the manufacturing process. The label thus acts as a form of consumer protection, ensuring transparency and compliance with religious expectations. Moreover, the label helps consumers assess whether a product aligns with their personal and community values. In the Indonesian context—where the majority of the population is Muslim—the concept of halal is deeply embedded in everyday life and reflects not only physical needs but also spiritual obligations. Islamic teachings emphasize the importance of consuming products that are both halal (permissible) and *thayyib* (pure and wholesome), which reflects a comprehensive understanding and practice of faith. As such, halal consumption is an essential part of religious observance and is closely tied to national policy priorities in religious development. Based on this theoretical framework, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Halal labels have a positive effect on purchasing decisions for Wardah cosmetic products.

Religiosity

According to Glock and Stark, religiosity encompasses beliefs, values, signs, and organized activities that form the core of meaningful religious experience (Sungadi, 2020). Rahman et al. (2015) define religiosity as the degree of individual commitment to their faith, which can be observed through their attitudes and behavior (Mujahid & Muthohar, 2023). A widely used framework for measuring religiosity is the five-dimensional model developed by R. Atark and C.Y. Glock, as cited in Jalaludin (1996), which includes ideological, ritual, experiential, intellectual, and consequential dimensions (Astogini et al., 2011).

Religiosity reflects an individual's religious commitment, particularly their faith (iman), which is demonstrated through adherence to religious beliefs and practices. Individuals with a high level of religiosity tend to make more deliberate and value-driven consumption choices, ensuring that the products they purchase align with their religious expectations and ethical standards. Religiosity serves as a motivational force that encourages individuals to act in accordance with their religious obligations, including in their consumption behavior. As such, religious consumers are more likely to prioritize halal certification and ethical branding in their purchasing decisions. Based on the theoretical discussion above, the following research hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Religiosity has a positive effect on the decision to purchase Wardah cosmetic products.

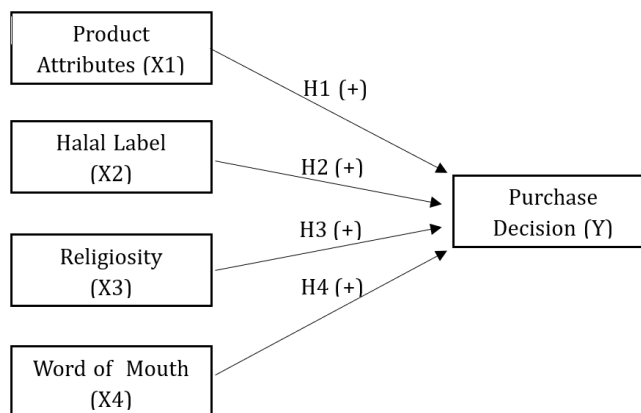
Word of Mouth (WOM)

Word of Mouth (WOM) refers to a form of informal promotion, where consumers share personal experiences and recommend products or services to others (Goyette et al., 2010). WOM occurs when individuals who have used a product communicate their satisfaction—or dissatisfaction—to those who have not yet experienced it, effectively acting as promoters through personal communication (Lupiyoadi and Hamdani, 2006). This type of communication plays a critical role in shaping consumer perceptions and purchase decisions, as it is perceived as more credible and trustworthy compared to traditional advertising.

WOM can take the form of commentary on product quality, service speed, brand reputation, or overall satisfaction (Cheung & Thadani, 2012; Keller, 1993; Steffes & Burgee, 2009). It can be either positive or negative, but positive WOM, in particular, can accelerate public awareness and influence buying behavior. WOM functions as a type of unpaid advertising that not only spreads information but also offers authentic recommendations regarding brands, products, and services. Consumers are more likely to trust recommendations from peers, especially when evaluating new or unfamiliar products. Given its significant influence on consumer behavior, especially in closely-knit communities such as boarding schools, WOM becomes an important factor in shaping purchasing decisions. Based on this theoretical foundation, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Word of Mouth (WOM) has a positive effect on purchasing decisions for Wardah cosmetic products.

Figure 1. Overview of the Conceptual Framework



Methods

This research uses a quantitative approach. The population in this study consists of students from Islamic boarding schools in Kalibebber Village, Mojotengah District, Wonosobo Regency. A population is defined as a generalization area composed of subjects or objects possessing certain characteristics determined by the researcher to be studied and from which conclusions are drawn (Sugiyono, 2011).

The sampling technique applied in this study is random sampling, a method where each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected, without considering stratification (Sugiyono, 2004). To determine the appropriate sample size, the Slovin formula was used. Based on a population size (N) of 5,630, a sample size (n) of 100 respondents was selected.

Data collection was conducted using a structured questionnaire. Each item in the questionnaire was measured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree."

Operational Definition and Measurement of Variables

Purchase Decision (Y)

A purchasing decision refers to a consumer's behavior in determining a decision before making a purchase, including the process of seeking alternative products and ultimately deciding to buy (Kotler and Armstrong, 2008).. Indicators of purchasing decisions include: problem recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, purchasing decision, and post-purchase behavior.

Product Attributes (X1)

Product attributes are the elements inherent in a product that serve as the main basis for consumer decision-making (Suswardji, 2012). Indicators of product attributes include: product quality, product features, and product design.

Halal Label (X2)

A halal label refers to a written or visual declaration on product packaging that indicates the product has been certified as halal (Rangkuti, 2010). Indicators of a halal label include images, writing, and a combination of both. Images refer to visual representations such as symbols or patterns, which may depict animals, people, plants, or other forms relevant to the product. Writing includes clear and legible text that explicitly communicates the product's halal status. The combination of image and text involves the integration of these two elements into a unified design on the

packaging, serving as a clear and recognizable mark of halal certification for consumers.

Religiosity (X3)

Religiosity is defined as a manifestation of signs, beliefs, values, and organized activities that form the core of meaningful religious experience (Astogini et al., 2011). Indicators of religiosity include: belief, worship, appreciation, religious knowledge, and religious experience.

Word of Mouth (WOM) (X4)

Word of Mouth (WOM) is a form of informal promotion where consumers recommend products to others through verbal communication. Indicators of WOM include: talking, recommending, and encouraging others to try the product.

Result and Discussions

To examine the simultaneous effect of several independent variables on the dependent variable, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted. The independent variables analyzed include Turnaround Time (TAT), Trust in Local Halal (TLH), Trustworthiness (TR), and Trust in Word of Mouth (TWOM), while the dependent variable is Customer Satisfaction Level (TKP). Table 1 presents the results of the regression coefficients, t-values, and significance levels for each variable in the regression model.

Table1. Multiple Linear Regression Test Results Table

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	,369	2,081		,178	,859
TAT	,263	,117	,174	2,251	,027
TLH	,385	,103	,332	3,736	,000
TR	,253	,087	,264	2,918	,004
TWOM	,451	,125	,284	3,614	,000

a. Dependent Variable: TKP

Based on the test results, the multiple linear regression equation is obtained as follows:

$$Y = 0.369 + 0.263X_1 + 0.385X_2 + 0.253X_3 + 0.451X_4$$

Based on the results of the multiple linear regression equation, the constant value of 0.369 indicates that if all independent variables—product attributes, halal labels, religiosity, and Word of Mouth (WOM)—are held constant or at zero, the average potential purchasing decision of the student samples in this study is 0.369%.

The coefficient for the product attribute variable (X_1) is 0.263, which means that a 1% increase in product attributes will increase purchasing decisions by 0.263%, assuming other variables remain constant. This suggests that product attributes have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. For the halal label variable (X_2), the coefficient value of 0.385 implies that a 1% increase in halal labeling will raise purchasing decisions by 0.385%, assuming other factors do not change. This highlights the importance of halal certification in influencing consumer purchase behavior.

The religiosity variable (X_3) has a coefficient of 0.253, indicating that a 1% increase in religiosity will increase purchasing decisions by 0.253%, assuming all other variables remain unchanged. This shows that consumer religiosity positively contributes to purchasing decisions. Finally, the Word of Mouth (WOM) variable (X_4) has the highest coefficient of 0.451, meaning a 1% increase in WOM will lead to a 0.451% increase in purchasing decisions, assuming other variables are constant. This underlines the significant role that recommendations and opinions from others play in influencing consumer decisions.

Table 2. Table of Determination Coefficient Test Results (*Adjusted R Square*)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,707 ^a	,500	,479	2,196

a. Predictors: (Constant), TWOM, TLH, TAT, TR

Table 2 presents the results of the Determination Coefficient Test (Adjusted R Square) for the multiple linear regression model. The value of R Square obtained from the analysis is 0.500, indicating that 50.0% of the variation in the dependent

variable—purchasing decisions (Y)—can be explained by the combined influence of the four independent variables: Product Attributes (X1), Halal Label (X2), Religiosity (X3), and Word of Mouth (WOM) (X4).

This means that half of the changes or differences in consumers' purchasing decisions within the study sample can be accounted for by these factors, highlighting their significant role in shaping consumer behavior. The adjusted R Square value of 0.479 slightly corrects this estimate by considering the number of predictors in the model and the sample size, providing a more accurate measure of the model's explanatory power.

However, it is important to note that the remaining 50.0% of the variation in purchasing decisions is attributed to other variables or influences not included in this research. These may include factors such as price sensitivity, brand loyalty, marketing strategies, social influences, economic conditions, or personal preferences, which could also affect consumers' decisions but were beyond the scope of this study. Thus, while the model provides a substantial explanation, there is still room for further research to explore additional determinants of purchasing behavior.

The Influence of Product Attributes on Purchasing Decisions

Based on the research findings, product attributes have a significant and positive effect on purchasing decisions. As shown in Table 4.10, the t-value for the product attribute variable is 2.251, which exceeds the critical t-table value of 1.660 at the chosen significance level. This statistical evidence confirms that product attributes are an important determinant in shaping consumers' purchasing behavior, specifically for Wardah cosmetic products.

Product attributes encompass various elements such as product quality, design, features, durability, and packaging. These characteristics play a crucial role in influencing consumers' perceptions and evaluations of a product. In the context of Wardah cosmetics, strong product attributes contribute to building a favorable image and trust among students, who are the sample population in this study. High-quality ingredients, appealing packaging, and innovative features are likely to enhance satisfaction and confidence in the product, which in turn motivates consumers to make a purchase.

Moreover, the positive influence of product attributes reflects the growing consumer awareness and demand for products that not only meet basic functional

needs but also align with their lifestyle and preferences. For Wardah, maintaining superior product attributes supports its competitive advantage in a crowded cosmetics market, helping to attract and retain customers. This finding underscores the importance for marketers and product developers to continually innovate and improve product attributes to meet evolving consumer expectations and drive purchasing decisions.

The Influence of Halal Labels on Purchasing Decisions

The study also reveals that halal labels have a significant and positive impact on purchasing decisions. As presented in Table 4.10, the t-value for the halal label variable is 3.736, which is well above the critical t-table value of 1.660, indicating strong statistical significance. This finding confirms that the presence of halal certification on Wardah cosmetic products plays a crucial role in influencing the purchasing behavior of the student respondents.

In a predominantly Muslim country like Indonesia, halal certification is more than just a label—it represents adherence to religious dietary and ethical standards, providing consumers with assurance that the product complies with Islamic law. For many consumers, especially those who prioritize religious observance in their daily lives, the halal label becomes a vital trust marker that guides their purchasing decisions. This trust reduces uncertainty and perceived risk, fostering consumer confidence in the product's safety and appropriateness.

Furthermore, the halal label aligns Wardah's brand identity with the values and beliefs of its target market, creating emotional and cultural resonance that strengthens brand loyalty. This influence reflects a broader trend where consumers increasingly seek products that not only fulfill functional needs but also resonate with their personal and religious principles. As a result, halal certification can serve as a significant competitive advantage, encouraging consumers to choose Wardah cosmetics over non-halal or uncertified alternatives.

The Influence of Religiosity on Purchasing Decisions

The study's results further demonstrate that religiosity has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions. As shown in Table 4.10, the t-value for the religiosity variable is 2.918, which exceeds the critical t-table value of 1.660, confirming the statistical significance of this relationship. This indicates that consumers' level of religious commitment plays an important role in shaping their buying behavior.

Specifically, students who exhibit higher degrees of religiosity tend to approach their purchasing decisions with greater deliberation and mindfulness. They are more likely to evaluate products carefully to ensure that their choices align with their religious values, ethical standards, and expectations. This conscientious approach means that religiosity acts not only as a personal belief system but also as a guiding framework for consumption, influencing preferences and priorities when selecting products such as cosmetics.

Moreover, this finding underscores the importance of integrating cultural and spiritual factors into marketing strategies, especially in markets with strong religious demographics. For brands like Wardah, understanding and respecting the religious sensibilities of their consumers helps foster trust and loyalty, as customers perceive that the products resonate with their faith-based values. Overall, religiosity shapes consumer behavior by encouraging choices that reflect both personal convictions and social identity.

The Influence of Word of Mouth (WOM) on Purchasing Decisions

The study further reveals that Word of Mouth (WOM) has a strong positive and significant impact on purchasing decisions. As indicated in Table 4.10, the t-value for the WOM variable is 3.614, which exceeds the critical t-table value of 1.660, confirming the statistical significance of this effect. This finding highlights that positive recommendations and endorsements from peers, family members, or other trusted individuals greatly influence students' decisions to purchase Wardah cosmetics.

WOM functions as a powerful social mechanism that fosters trust and credibility, especially in markets where consumers rely heavily on personal experiences and informal communication to evaluate products. In the context of community-based settings such as Islamic boarding schools, the role of WOM becomes even more pronounced. Here, information and opinions circulate quickly among close-knit groups, which can accelerate product awareness and adoption.

Moreover, the influence of WOM goes beyond just sharing information; it helps reduce perceived risk and uncertainty, making consumers more confident in their purchase choices. Positive WOM contributes to building a strong reputation for the Wardah brand, reinforcing consumer loyalty and encouraging repeat purchases. This underscores the importance for marketers to actively engage with customers and encourage positive WOM as part of their overall strategy to enhance market penetration and brand trust.

Conclusion

Based on the results of statistical tests using multiple linear regression analysis, it can be concluded that the variables Product Attributes (X1), Halal Labels (X2), Religiosity (X3), and Word of Mouth (WOM) (X4) each have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions (Y) for Wardah cosmetic products among students at the Kalibeber Village Islamic Boarding School, Mojotengah District, Wonosobo Regency.

In light of the conclusions above, several suggestions can be proposed. First, product attributes should be a key focus for producers. Well-developed product attributes help students—as consumers—identify products that meet their needs and expectations. In a competitive market, offering distinct and appealing combinations of product features can enhance consumer interest and influence purchasing decisions.

Second, halal labels and religiosity have been shown to positively influence purchasing behavior. This indicates that students are aware of the risks associated with using non-halal products and are committed to making ethically and religiously sound choices. Therefore, it is essential for manufacturers to consistently include clear halal labeling on their products to ensure alignment with Islamic principles and to strengthen consumer trust. Additionally, students should be encouraged to apply their religious understanding when selecting products to ensure their choices reflect both spiritual values and personal expectations. Muslim consumers, particularly students, are advised to be more selective and critical in evaluating product content and certification.

Third, Word of Mouth (WOM) also plays a significant role in shaping purchasing decisions. Students tend to seek opinions from peers or acquaintances before making a purchase. This emphasizes the importance of interpersonal communication and peer recommendations in the decision-making process. As a result, producers should develop marketing strategies that leverage WOM—particularly through positive, person-to-person interactions. Creating a satisfying customer experience can lead to organic product promotion, increased awareness, and improved sales performance.

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