



ANALYZING GENDER-RELATED FACTORS TOWARD THE PURCHASE INTENTION OF MALE SKINCARE PRODUCTS IN INDONESIA

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Abstract: *Male skincare products are growing in Indonesia along with the metrosexual phenomenon. However, Indonesian culture is not completely ready for metrosexual behavior and more Indonesian men do not identify themselves as metrosexuals, and yet still use skincare, at least facial wash. This study seeks to investigate gender-related constructs influencing the purchase intention of male skincare products. The exogenous variables in this research are the need for product gender congruence, purchase secrecy, and product attributes (focusing on packaging design and the “For Men” label only). 112 respondents who meet the criteria of 17 years and above, use skincare – at least facial wash, and care for their appearance but do not associate themselves with metrosexuals, are included in the analysis. PLS-SEM is employed in this study and the results support all the hypotheses tested.*

Keywords: *Need for Product Gender Congruity, Purchase Secrecy, Product Attributes, Purchase Intention.*

Abstrak: Produk perawatan kulit pria semakin berkembang di Indonesia seiring dengan fenomena metroseksual. Namun, budaya Indonesia belum sepenuhnya siap dengan perilaku metroseksual dan lebih banyak pria Indonesia yang tidak mengidentifikasi dirinya sebagai metroseksual, namun tetap menggunakan perawatan kulit, minimal facial wash. Penelitian ini berusaha untuk menyelidiki konstruksi terkait gender yang mempengaruhi niat beli produk perawatan kulit pria. Variabel eksogen dalam penelitian ini adalah kebutuhan akan keselarasan gender produk, kerahasiaan pembelian, dan atribut produk (fokus pada desain kemasan dan label “Untuk Pria saja”). Sebanyak 112 responden yang memenuhi kriteria berusia 17 tahun ke atas, menggunakan perawatan kulit – minimal facial wash, dan merawat penampilan namun tidak mengasosiasikan dirinya dengan metroseksual, diikutsertakan dalam analisis. PLS-SEM digunakan dalam penelitian ini dan hasilnya mendukung semua hipotesis yang diuji.

Kata Kunci: Kebutuhan Kesesuaian Jenis Kelamin Produk, Kerahasiaan Pembelian, Atribut Produk, Niat Membeli.

1 | INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a large and growing market for grooming products. The country has a 274.9 million population (Worldometer, 2020), and 50.58% are men (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2020). This makes Indonesia a very promising market for men's skincare products. Facial skincare is the biggest category among skincare products in terms of revenue with a value of \$1.17 billion in 2022. The estimated CAGR for skincare market is 6.02% through the period 2022-2026 (Statista, 2021).

Metrosexual men have been a great contributor to the growth of men's facial skincare products in Indonesia. Despite metrosexual being the emergent definition of masculinity, the traditional masculinity definition continues to be widely embraced. The majority of Indonesian society still sees men who use facial skincare as less masculine, less macho, and even deviant (Juliarty, 2019; Putranto, Suyanto, and Ariadi, 2022; Byrne, & Milestone, 2023).

Byrne et al., (2018) found that men would use facial skincare but hide the behavior from others. An informant who works at an airport duty-free shop says that it is very rare that men would walk in and shop for facial skincare themselves. They would ask their female partner, wife, or mother to buy it for them. Men may use facial skincare but there is a clear reluctance to talk about that with others, which may lead to purchasing and consuming the products in secret (Byrne and Milestone, 2022). With the booming e-commerce now, online purchase provides the secrecy desired, allowing men to retain the traditional social expectation of masculinity.

Despite the perception attached to male skincare consumption behavior, facial wash seems to be an exception. Men would use facial wash and do not consider the behavior and product to be feminine or less masculine. To them, a facial cleanser is a basic treatment to care for dull skin or pimples (McNeill and Douglas, 2011; Juliarty, 2019; Setiyaningsih &, Djatmikowati, 2019). To some extent, these men do care for their appearance but do not want to consume other facial skincare products such as toners, moisturizers, and serums as those products may be effeminate (McNeill and Douglas, 2011; Hall, 2015), align with the findings that men generally avoid being perceived as feminine (Gill, Henwood and McLean, 2005; Hall, Gough and Seymour-Smith, 2013; Kimmel, 2013).

This context suggests that there are genders associated with facial skincare products. Besides the product types, labels and design are also important factors in determining whether a product is of a certain gender. 'For Men' labeling is a clear attribute to create the gender distinction of facial skincare products. The study

conducted by McNeill & Douglas (2011) finds that colors as one of the design elements serve as a gender identifier, too. Black, blue, and grey are seen as masculine while white, pink, and green are considered feminine. Color is seen as more important than the 'For Men' label. Men would rather pick a facial skincare product with the color black, blue, or grey than one with pink color even though it has the word 'Men' on the packaging.

There have been several scholarly works identifying factors influencing the consumption behavior of men's grooming products in Indonesia. Factors included are social media marketing, brand trust, brand image, health concerns, self-image, aging concern, physical attractiveness, product attributes, subjective norms, celebrity endorsement, social expectation, brand imagery attributes, beliefs in products attributes, normative influences, and attitudes towards applying skincare products (Irawan and Widjaja, 2011; Herdiyanti and Titus, 2013; Adam, 2017; Puspasari and Aprilianty, 2019; Sanny et al., 2020).

Similar research has also been done in other countries. In Thailand, the factors influencing the consumption behavior of male skincare products investigated are metrosexuality, marketing efforts of skincare firms, reference groups, demographic profiles, beliefs, self-image, normative influence, and attitudes (Sukato and Elsey, 2009; Boutkaska, 2019; Setiyaningsih, 2020). Mounghkem & Surakiatpinyo (2010) studied the correlations between motivations, marketing mix and product attributes, subjective norm/reference group, and the perception of homosexual or metrosexual, and purchase intention as well as product purchase in Sweden. Zhou & Niyomsilp (2021) has investigated personality, culture, social, and marketing stimulation factors in China. A comparative study between China and Pakistani men was conducted by (Khan et al., 2017). Ridwan et al. (2017) also carried out a study comparing men from Suwon City, South Korea, and Bandung, Indonesia.

Despite the growing market of men's grooming products, there is limited research about gender-related factors influencing non-metrosexual men to not consume or to consume secretly facial skincare other than facial wash. Employing the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) as the main framework, this research aims to investigate the correlation between the need for product gender congruity, purchase secrecy, product attributes (packaging color and "For Men" product label), and purchase intention.

The quantitative research method is employed in this study to answer the following research questions: 1) Does Need for Product Gender Congruity have a

positive correlation with the Purchase Intention of Male Skincare Products?, 2) Does Purchase Secrecy have a positive correlation with Purchase Intention of Male Skincare Products?, and 3) Does Product Attributes have a positive correlation with Purchase Intention of Male Skincare Products? The research finds that all gender-related factors investigated in this study, have significant correlations with the purchase intention of male skincare products.

Purchase Intention

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991) serves as the conceptual framework for this study. TPB says that one's purchase intention is influenced by his attitude towards the behavior, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control. The theory is expandable and many studies have added various constructs to it such as value for money and past experiences (Boon, Fern and Chee, 2020); environmental concern and availability (Mamun et al., 2020); celebrity endorsement with five dimensions i.e. likability, credibility, personality, and attractiveness (Munasinghe et al., 2020); the degree of environmental concern, product attribute and types of green purchase (Sharma and Foropon, 2019). This research sees that more constructs can be added to TPB to investigate the purchase intention of male skincare products. The need for product gender congruity, purchase secrecy, and product attributes focusing on packaging design and the "For Men" label are studied within the TPB framework representing gender-related factors influencing the purchase intention. A strong intention is likely to affect behavior. Therefore, purchase intention in this research is defined as one's drive or choice to enact a particular behavior (Armitage & Conner, 1998, in Mhlophe, 2016).

Need for Product Gender Congruity

Self-Congruity Theory (Sirgy, 1982; 2015) postulates that consumers use products that reflect their self-concept or identity. As an important part of identity, gender is often the symbolic meaning consumers seek in a product. Fugate & Phillips (2010) argue that perceived product gender has a positive correlation with product gender congruence. Product gender congruence is defined as the sync between consumers' self-concept and perceived product gender. Product gender congruence is more important to men than to women, which means there is a higher need for men to purchase products they can identify as masculine as it is related to self-image. In

other words, products with feminine characteristics tend to discourage purchase from men because they want to maintain their masculinity (Neale, Robbie and Martin, 2016). Four experiments in Gal and Wilkie's study (2010) support the notion that men have a stronger need for gender congruence than women. Those who seek product gender congruence will pay more attention to gendered marketing cues which will lead to purchase intention (Fugate and Phillips, 2010). Therefore, the hypothesis proposed is:

H1: There is a positive correlation between the Need for Product Gender Congruity and the Purchase Intention of male skincare products.

Purchase Secrecy

Purchase secrecy is the experience of hiding certain purchases from other people because they probably would disapprove of the purchases (Bristol and Mangleburg, 2005), cited in Bruner (2009). People show things they own or do to express themselves and hide things that will let others think of them as being abnormal (Goodwin, 1992). Looking at how Indonesian culture still deems male skincare consumption behavior as deviant (Juliarty, 2019), purchase secrecy might be one of the factors influencing Indonesian men to consume facial skincare other than facial wash. Byrne et al. (2018) confirm the view that men still try to retain the traditional masculinity concept. Even if they consume facial skincare, they would keep it a secret and ask their female partner or family members to buy it for them or do the purchase online (Byrne, Milestone and Miles, 2018). Therefore, the hypothesis proposed is:

H2: There is a positive correlation between Purchase Secrecy and Purchase Intention of male skincare products.

Product Attributes

Product attributes play an important role in influencing purchase intention. There is research in various industries proofing that different product attributes affect purchase intention. In the fashion industry, functional and symbolic attributes of products against purchase behavior have been tested in many studies (Hsu and Burns, 2002; Chen et al., 2004; Wu and Delong, 2006; Rahnam et al., 2008; Hung et al., 2011; Shukla and Purani, 2012; Ergin and Akbay, 2010; cited in Lee and Nguyen, 2017). In medical equipment e-commerce, product information and price are the product attributes showing a positive influence on purchase intention (Lee, Cheng and Shih, 2017). Packaging, promotion, and salesperson are the product attributes

proven to influence purchase intention in male skincare products (Sukato and Elsey, 2009; Mustaqim et al., 2020).

Packaging is often overlooked compared to other product attributes and it can easily influence consumers' perceptions (Topoyan and Bulut, 2008). In the skincare industry, the packaging does not only serve the function to protect the products but also to improve perceived benefits by consumers through the design and materials used. Together with product labels, they are very important in influencing purchase decisions. In the context of this research, packaging design and the "For Men" product label are two product attributes that will be investigated as they are considered vital in shaping product gender perception of facial skincare products. Hence, the hypothesis proposed is:

H3: There is a positive correlation between Product Attributes and Purchase Intention of male skincare products.

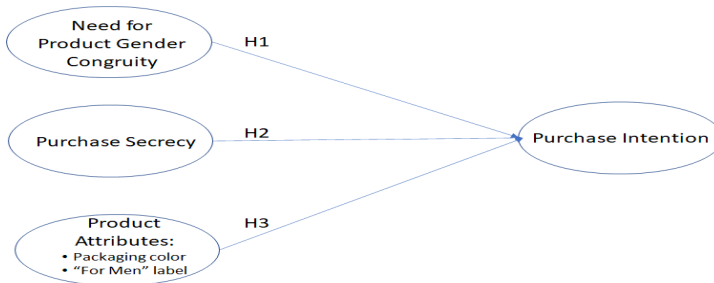


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

2 | METHOD

Sampling

The sampling design used is purposive sampling. The sample size is calculated using Power Analysis (Sarstedt et al., 2022). With the effect size of 0.3 (medium), error level of 0.05, and confidence level of 0.95, G*Power produces the number 111 for the appropriate sample size.

The criteria for the respondents are males aged 17 and above who use skincare, at least facial wash, and care about their appearance. The concern for appearance is measured with the screening question: "How concerned are you with your appearance?" on a scale of 1 to 10. Those who answer 7 and above are included in the study.

Data Collection

Data was collected through questionnaires. A Google form was used as the questionnaire media. A total of 169 responses were collected, and 112 samples satisfy the requirements and are used in this study.

Measurement

To ensure the validity of the measurement used, items from previous studies are adapted. The need for product gender congruity scale is borrowed from Fugate and Phillips (2010); purchase secrecy indicators are adjusted from Bristol and Mangleburg (2005) in Bruner (2009); and product attributes and purchase intention are modified from Mhlophe (2016). The 1-5 Likert Scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) will be used to measure the indicators.

Data Analysis

PLS-SEM is employed as this study aims to examine the causal-predictive characteristics of the predictors against the target construct. Two steps are performed with PLS-SEM, the measurement model and the structural model (Sarstedt et al., 2022), as discussed below.

3 | RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

Demographic Information

The respondents' profile is described in the table below. The majority of the respondents are 17-25 years old, high school graduates and equivalent and bachelor's degree holders, domicile mostly in DKI Jakarta. 65% do not use hair styling products daily, 60% use perfume every day, 59% do not follow fashion trends, and 57% shop at online stores.

Table 1. Respondents Profile

	Freq.	%		Freq.	%
Education			Age		
High school graduates and equivalen	50	45%	17-25	76	68%
Bachelor's degree holders (S1)	47	42%	26-40	25	22%
Master's degree holders (S2)	14	13%	41-55	10	9%
Doctors/Ph.Ds (S3)	1	1%	≥56	1	1%
Domicile			Daily use of hair-styling products		
Jakarta	49	44%	No	73	65%
Banten	9	8%	Yes	39	35%
West Java	8	7%	Daily use of perfume		
Central Java	5	4%	No	45	40%
East Java	10	9%	Yes	67	60%
North Sumatra	5	4%	Following fashion trends		
Riau	2	2%	No	66	59%
West Kalimantan	1	1%	Yes	46	41%
North Sulawesi	4	4%	Purchase place		
Other	1	1%	Physical stores	45	40%
			Online stores	64	57%
			Others	3	3%

Measurement Model

The first step in conducting the analysis using the PLS-SEM is to examine the measurement model (also known as the outer model), that is, to see how the measured variables represent the constructs. Loadings must be examined when assessing the reflective measurement model. Loading values should be above 0.708, indicating that the constructs are reliable (Hair et al., 2019b). Loadings between 0.4 and 0.7 should only be eliminated when they can improve the Composite Reliability or the AVE (Hair et al., 2017). The loadings shown in Table 2 all meet the criteria and therefore, are maintained for structural analysis.

Internal Consistency Reliability

The internal consistency reliability is measured using Cronbach's Alpha, rho_A, and Composite Reliability. Cronbach's Alpha tends to underestimate and Composite Reliability is often too liberal. Rho_A is considered the best estimate for internal consistency reliability (Sarstedt et al., 2022). The results of internal consistency reliability of 0.6-0.7 are considered acceptable for exploratory research, and 0.7-0.95

indicates very good reliability. A value higher than 0.95 is undesirable since it may represent redundancy in the indicators (Hair et al., 2019a). The results in table 2 are all within the range of 0.6 and 0.95, therefore the constructs are reliable.

Table 2. Reliability

Constructs	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	CR
Need for Product Gender Congruity, (Fugate and Phillips, 2010)				
GC1 I like products with the same gender characteristics as myself	0.803	0.621	0.67	0.797
GC2 I am uncomfortable buying items that I know are specifically sold to the opposite gender	0.871			
GC3 I do not care about the gender of a product if it meets my needs (R)	0.566			
Purchase Secrecy Bristol and Mangleburg (2005) in Bruner (2009)				
PS1 I sometimes hide the skincare products I buy from others	0.901	0.822	0.826	0.894
PS2 I sometimes buy skincare products without telling others about them	0.808			
PS3 People around me would be upset if they know about the skincare products I've bought	0.868			
Product Attributes (Design and "For Men" Label) (Mhlophe, 2016)				
PA1 Packaging design is a way of distinguishing between female and male skincare products	0.815	0.854	0.879	0.888
PA2 I can recognize skincare products with designs different from those targeting women	0.696			
PA3 I have more trust in skincare products with designs different from those targeting women	0.812			
PA4 Labels are a way of distinguishing between female and male skincare products	0.821			
PA5 I can recognize "for men" skincare products	0.592			
PA6 I have more trust in skincare that has the "FOR MEN" label	0.778			
Purchase Intention (Mhlophe, 2016)				
PI1 My perceptions of the gender of certain skincare products are linked to my intention to buy male facial skincare products	0.755	0.8	0.827	0.859
PI3 My concerns about fitting in the group improve my intention to buy male facial skincare products	0.604			
PI4 I intend to buy skincare products if I can keep the purchase a secret	0.706			
PI5 I intend to buy skincare products with designs different from those targeting women	0.854			
PI6 I intend to buy skincare products with the "For Men" label	0.773			

Convergent and Discriminant Validity

AVE is used to test the convergent validity and should have values above 0.5. All constructs have AVE above the threshold and therefore, the measurement model has established convergent validity (Hair et al., 2019a).

Discriminant validity tested whether each construct is different from the other which means that each construct explains a unique phenomenon. HTMT is considered more precise for PLS-SEM and the values below 0.9 suggest that the discriminant validity has been reached (Sarstedt et al., 2022).

Table 3. Convergent Validity (AVE)

Constructs	AVE
Need for Product Gender Congruity	0.575
Purchase Secrecy	0.739
Product Attributes	0.573
Purchase Intention	0.552

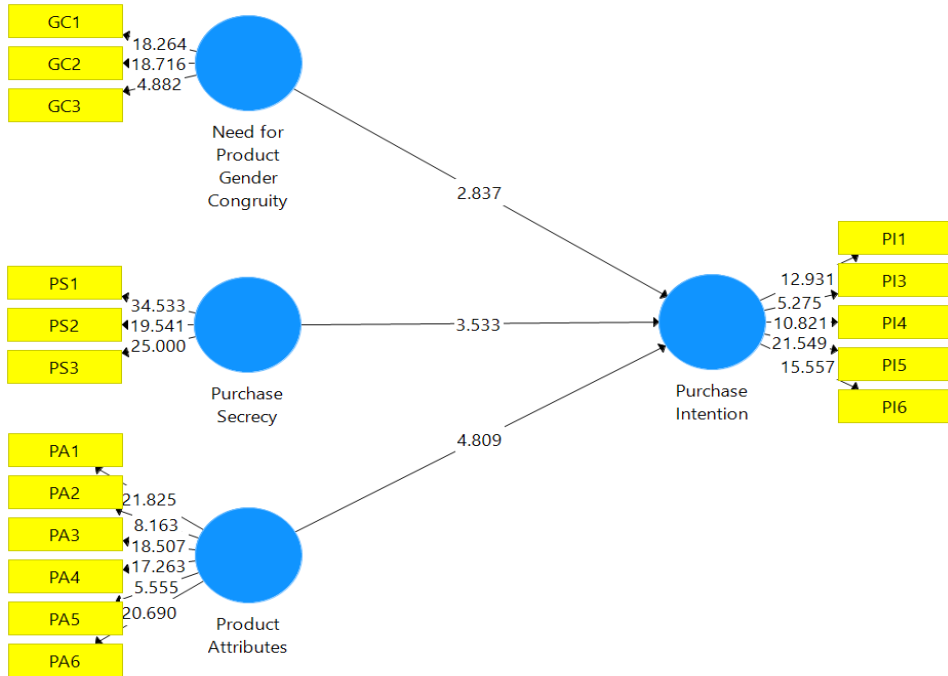
Table 4. Discriminant Validity (HTMT)

	Need for Product Gender Congruity	Product Attribute	Purchase Intention	Purchase Secrecy
Need for Product Gender Congruity				
Product Attribute	0.889			
Purchase Intention	0.848	0.747		
Purchase Secrecy	0.667	0.53	0.768	

Structural Model

The second step in PLS-SEM is to examine the structural model. A path diagram is created in Smart PLS 3 to describe the latent variables and the directions as in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2. Structural Model



Collinearity Statistics (Variance Inflation Factor)

Collinearity (used interchangeably with multicollinearity) is defined as the correlations between two or more independent variables. Multicollinearity makes it difficult to estimate the effect of each construct against the dependent variable as it creates biases among the constructs (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016; Hair et al., 2019). A common method to assess multicollinearity is by calculating the Variance Inflation Factor.

VIF is an indicator showing the effect of a predictor on a regression coefficient's standard error. A high VIF means multicollinearity exists and two or more independent variables are highly correlated. The threshold recommended for the VIF value is below 3 (Sarstedt et al., 2022). All values displayed in Table 5 are less than 3, which means that multicollinearity is not a problem.

Table 5. Variance Inflation Factor

Construct	Indicator	VIF	Construct	Indicator	VIF
Need for Product Gender Congruity	GC1	1.41	Purchase Secrecy	PS1	2.37
	GC2	1.65		PS2	1.59
	GC3	1.21		PS3	2.08
Product Attributes	PA1	2.53	Purchase Intention	PI1	1.93
	PA2	1.68		PI3	2.12
	PA3	2.01		PI4	2.08
	PA4	2.6		PI5	2.34
	PA5	1.51		PI6	1.77
	PA6	1.74			

The next step would be to test the hypotheses. A hypothesis is supported if the t-value of a variable is higher than 1.645 and the p-value is below 0.05. Table 6 below demonstrates that the t-values of Need for Product Gender Congruity, Purchase Secrecy, and Product Attributes are higher than 1.645 with p-values lower than 0.05, therefore, they are significant. Bootstrapping is used with 10,000 samples (Sarstedt et al., 2022), and the bias-corrected and accelerated method for the confidence intervals is based on the recommendation of (Hair et al., 2019a).

Table 6. Path Coefficients

Path Coefficients	Standardized Regression Coefficient	T Statistics	P Values	Significance	Result
Need for Product Gender Congruity -> Purchase Intention	0.251	2.837	0.002	Significant	Hypothesis supported
Product Attribute -> Purchase Intention	0.383	4.809	0	Significant	Hypothesis supported
Purchase Secrecy -> Purchase Intention	0.308	3.533	0	Significant	Hypothesis supported

R² value is an indicator of explanatory power. A value of 0.75 is regarded as substantial, 0.5 as moderate, and 0.25 as weak (Hair et al., 2019a). R² value of the model is 0.624, which means that 62.4% of Purchase Intention as the target can be explained by its predictors, while the other 37.6% is explained by variables not included in this study.

Table 7. F-squared

Variables	P Values
Need for Product Gender Congruity -> Purchase Intention	0.103
Product Attribute -> Purchase Intention	0.028
Purchase Secrecy -> Purchase Intention	0.064

f^2 indicates the effect size against R^2 if one predictor is excluded. Cohen (1988) in (Hair et al., 2019a) classifies the f^2 value between 0.02 and 0.15 as a low effect, between 0.15 and 0.35 as a medium, and 0.35 or higher as strong. In this study, all exogenous constructs have little effect on R^2 if one of them is omitted.

DISCUSSION

The research demonstrates the significance of correlations between variables. From the three constructs, product attributes have the most explanatory power indicated by the R^2 value. Purchase secrecy ranks second, and the need for product gender congruity is last. All three hypotheses are supported.

The study shows that the Need for Product Gender Congruity has a positive correlation with the Purchase Intention for Male Skincare Products. It confirms (Fugate and Phillips, 2010)'s study that men do care for product gender congruity. In line with the self-congruence theory by Sirgy (1982), people would want to be consistent with their ideal self, thus the actual self adapts and performs certain behavior for the purpose. In the Indonesian patriarchal culture, the traditional masculinity concept is still widely embraced. Men are expected to behave manly, avoiding all the sissy stuff. Men seem to think that some skincare products are made for women, and thus, become reluctant to use them if there is no differentiation between the products intended for women and men. They may care for their appearance by styling their hair and wearing perfume every day or even wearing fashionable outfits, however, if they perceive the product to have feminine characteristics, it is very likely that they will refrain from buying the products so that they will not be labeled as deviant. To tap into men segment, skincare brands should be mindful of the need for product gender congruence and differentiate their offerings for women and men.

Purchase secrecy has also been confirmed to correlate with purchase intention. This second hypothesis is in line with (Byrne, Milestone and Miles, 2018)'s findings. There is a chance that men may use skincare products, but they would not be seen doing that to maintain a manly image (Byrne and Milestone, 2022). The metrosexual

lifestyle is emergent in big cities in Indonesia, including the domiciles of the majority of respondents in this study. Yet, there is a preference to hide the behavior of applying skincare from others around them. One of the reasons may be the shameful feeling or fear of being perceived as effeminate. Before the internet era, they may ask someone else, like their spouse or mother, to help buying the skincare products (Byrne, Milestone and Miles, 2018). The rise of the internet and online shopping has provided a convenient and private way to purchase the products they don't want others to know they are using. This setting might encourage men to purchase skincare products, and in turn, will increase the consumption rate in Indonesia. Firms should be present online, either in social media or e-commerce platform, to allow secrecy for men to purchase the skincare products.

Product attributes, which, in this study, focus on packaging design and label, are found to be positively correlated with purchase intention, confirming the findings from Sukato and Elsey's study (2009). In the Indonesian market, there are skincare products with manly designs and the "For Men" label, and other regular products with the undifferentiated packaging design and no additional "For Men" label. This study shows that product attributes have the most significant influence on male skincare product purchase intention. Skincare brands should pay attention to gendered clues through packaging, which is often overlooked (Topoyan and Bulut, 2008), by offering products with masculine designs and the "For Men" label to avoid possible feminine perception attached to them.

4 | CONCLUSION

With the metrosexual lifestyle being emergent amongst Indonesian men, the traditional masculinity concept is still salient. The patriarchal culture plays a significant role in shaping the masculinity concept, likely causing shame or fear to behave differently than the society's expectation. Men using skincare is somewhat considered feminine, which is against the norm. This paper contributes to more understanding on men's skincare purchase behavior from the gender-related perspectives. The variables examined are gender-related, and all variables i.e., the need for product gender congruity, purchase secrecy, and product attributes (focusing on packaging design and the "For Men" label) are confirmed to correlate with purchase intention. Items used to measure the constructs are proven reliable and meet the thresholds of convergent and discriminant validity. The constructs have no multicollinearity issues. The model's explanatory power is between

moderate and substantial. The effect size should any of the constructs omitted is little. This study helps to comprehend that men have a stronger need for product gender congruence, therefore, firms must take note on cues indicating genders as might be shown from product attributes. Packaging color is one of the elements to manage as well as the label. “For Men” is advised to be attached on skincare products targeting men. Besides the product gender congruence, e-commerce is a major opportunity for firms to reach men as it provides secrecy or privacy to purchase things they want to hide from others.

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