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IMPACT OF OVERCLAIMS, NEGATIVE E-WOM, AND DISSATISFACTION ON SWITCHING INTENTION: THE MODERATING ROLE OF ALTERNATIVE ATTRACTIVENESS

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses switching intention in the rapidly growing Indonesian local skincare industry, which is marked by excessive promotional claims (overclaims), negative online reviews (negative e-WOM), and consumer dissatisfaction. The objective of this research is to analyze the influence of these negative factors on switching intention, with alternative attractiveness serving as a moderating variable. The study employed a quantitative approach using an online survey involving 151 users of local skincare products selected through purposive sampling. The data were analyzed using WarpPLS 8.0. Overclaims, negative e-WOM, and dissatisfaction have a significant positive effect on switching intention. Alternative attractiveness strengthens the influence of negative e-WOM and dissatisfaction, but weakens the effect of overclaims. These findings highlight the importance of honest product claims, effective online reputation management, and consumer satisfaction in minimizing the risk of brand switching in a market filled with attractive alternatives. This study makes a theoretical contribution by demonstrating the role of alternative attractiveness, a factor that has rarely been examined in the local skincare industry

INTRODUCTION

The local skincare industry in Indonesia is currently growing rapidly, with numerous local brands competing to attract consumers through various claims—ranging from natural ingredients and advanced technology to instant results—which are not always scientifically proven. According to data cited from Badan Pengawas Obat dan Makanan (BPOM) (2024), there has been a surge in cosmetic businesses, increasing from 819 in 2021 to 1,039 by the end of 2023. By 2024, the number of cosmetic businesses had exceeded 1,500 units spread across various regions. This indicates a clear rise in demand for skincare products in Indonesia,

presenting significant business opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). However, amid this growing demand for skincare products, businesses face a key challenge: switching intention—or consumers' tendency to switch brands.

Switching intention refers to the willingness or interest in switching to another product or service, either partially or entirely (T. Chen et al., 2024a). It is also defined as the degree of a customer's intent to end their relationship with their current brand (Josephine Tyra, 2024). A high switching intention can lead customers to move to other skincare brands, whereas a low switching intention reduces the likelihood of losing customers.

Switching intention has become an important issue as it is key to a brand's sustainability in a dynamic market. When consumers have a tendency to switch brands, companies will incur additional costs to attract new customers and maintain market share. One of the factors influencing customers' switching intention is overclaims. Overclaims refer to exaggerated claims about a product's benefits and effectiveness, which often do not align with reality, potentially disappointing consumers and damaging trust in a brand (Jerrim et al., 2023).

Overclaims are a form of deception in advertising or corporate promotions, where misleading information is provided to customers by promising benefits that do not actually exist (Nurhanifah et al., 2025). Recently, social media has been abuzz with discussions about skincare products making overclaims. These products often contain ingredients that do not match what is stated on their packaging or feature excessively exaggerated promotional advertisements.

According to data cited from Suara Merdeka.Com (2024), the viral spread of overclaimed skincare products began when a doctor known as the "detective doctor" reviewed several well-known local skincare brands suspected of making exaggerated claims. These findings were reinforced by multiple laboratory test results. This overclaim phenomenon has made consumers more cautious about product claims in the market and increased their tendency to switch to other brands that genuinely provide safety guarantees.

Negative e-WOM (electronic word-of-mouth) can influence consumers to abandon problematic products and switch to alternatives perceived as better. The stronger the intensity of negative e-WOM, the lower the level of consumer trust in the product or brand (Hancock et al., 2023). This condition has the potential to increase switching intention—consumers' tendency to switch and try alternative brands deemed more trustworthy and capable of meeting their expectations. Negative e-WOM can arise due to unclear product information, which triggers consumer confusion and encourages them to spread negative reviews online. This situation ultimately raises the risk of brand-switching behavior (switching intention) among consumers (Thoa & Cuong, 2024).

The root of switching intention lies in consumer dissatisfaction with the products or services received (Sun et al., 2017). A customer's decision to continue using a brand or switch to another is heavily influenced by their preferences and perceived level of satisfaction. If a local skincare brand fails to meet customer expectations or needs, there is a high likelihood that the customer will develop an intention to switch to another local skincare brand. This occurs because the crucial aspects that satisfy the customer are not achieved, leading to dissatisfaction in the minds of local skincare customers (Prawira Samudra et al., 2021).

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that several factors—such as overclaim, negative e-WOM, and dissatisfaction—can influence a customer's decision to switch to another local skincare brand. However, a customer's decision to develop an intention to switch brands is not only influenced by these factors but can also be reinforced by the presence of alternative attractiveness.

Customer perception of alternative attractiveness can be a strong factor in enticing them to abandon their current product brand. When alternatives are available, customers will compare them with their current brand. If another alternative is believed to better satisfy their needs, the customer will switch to that alternative (Liao et al., 2017). According to Farghali et al. (2023), customers tend to switch to another product brand if the offered brand represents a key aspect perceived as more attractive or better than their current brand. Therefore, this study will include alternative attractiveness as a moderating variable.

Based on research conducted by H.T. Yi et al. (2023), it is stated that previous studies have not extensively explored the role of alternative attractiveness as a moderating variable, particularly in the context of local skincare brands. Therefore, this study is important to help business actors understand strategies for retaining customers amid the high alternative attractiveness of other skincare brands.

This study examines the variables of overclaims, negative e-WOM, and dissatisfaction toward switching intention, while also involving alternative attractiveness as a moderating variable. The complexity of this issue stems from the dynamics of consumer behavior in response to exaggerated product brand claims, negative information spreading online, customer dissatisfaction with local skincare brand services, and how alternative brand attractiveness strengthens consumers' intention to switch. Thus, this study not only analyzes direct effects but also the interaction of variables that play a role in the context of the local skincare industry.

This research also aims to analyze the influence of overclaims, negative e-WOM, and dissatisfaction on switching intention among users of local skincare brand products in Indonesia. Additionally, it seeks to examine the role of alternative attractiveness as a moderating variable in the relationship between overclaims, negative e-WOM, dissatisfaction, and switching intention. With these objectives, the study's findings are expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions, particularly for local skincare brand businesses in formulating marketing strategies and maintaining customer loyalty amid the high alternative attractiveness of competing brands.

RESEARCH MATERIALS AND METHODS

Push-Pull Theory

This theory explains the variables that influence an individual's decision to switch to using another product or service, which consist of push factors and pull factors. Push factors are defined as negative aspects of the previous product or service that drive customers to switch. Pull factors are defined as positive aspects of other products or services that attract customers to switch (Nass et al., 1995).

Based on the push-pull theory, the variables of overclaims, negative e-WOM, and dissatisfaction are included in the push factors. This is because when customers hear that the product they are using provides misleading information by promising benefits that do not exist, encounter negative reviews related to the brand, and experience dissatisfaction, it triggers the emergence of switching intention.

Alternative attractiveness is included in the pull factors, meaning it plays a role in attracting customers to switch to another brand. This variable is described as the positive characteristics of a competitor's service and also positively influences customers' switching intention.

Switching Intention

Switching intention refers to the intention to switch to using another product or service, either partially or entirely. Switching intention is related to the customer's desire to switch, which is based on their previous experiences with the products and services received. Switching intention can also be defined as the degree of a customer's intention to end their relationship with the current provider of products and services (Monoarfa et al., 2024). According to (da Veiga Leprevost et al., 2017), there are four indicators that can be used to measure switching intention: 1) Internal environment, 2) External environment, 3) Emotional response, and 4) Rational response.

Overclaims

Overclaims refer to exaggerated claims about a product's benefits that are not entirely aligned with reality (Atir & Dunning, 2025). Such misleading claims may lead to consumer dissatisfaction, diminish trust, and increase the likelihood of switching to other brands that are perceived as more credible. Overclaiming means making excessive claims, such as inflated costs or presenting false or exaggerated information about a product (Bleuze, 2025). The indicators used to measure the overclaims variable are: 1) Excessive claims, 2) Ingredient-content mismatch, and 3) Unrealistic claims (Vivancos et al., 2022).

Previous studies have primarily examined overclaims in relation to consumer trust (Sabilla Rachma & Borshalina, 2024), consumer legal protection against overclaiming practices in skincare products (Atir & Dunning, 2025). However, there has been limited research exploring overclaims in the context of switching intention.

Research specifically addressing the impact of overclaims on switching intention remains scarce, particularly within the scope of local skincare brands. In an increasingly competitive market, coupled with rising consumer expectations, negative perceptions resulting from overclaims not only have the potential to erode consumer trust but may also trigger consumers to shift toward brands that are perceived to be more honest and trustworthy.

H₁: Overclaims have a positive effect on switching intention

Negative E-WOM

According to Hancock et al. (2023), negative e-WOM can influence consumers to abandon problematic products and switch to alternatives perceived as better. The stronger the intensity of negative e-WOM, the lower the level of consumer trust in the product or brand. Negative electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) includes criticism, complaints, and unfavorable online reviews. Such content tends to heighten consumer skepticism, leading potential buyers to become more cautious and doubtful about brands in the market, primarily due to concerns about credibility, quality, and the reliability of the associated websites (Arica et al., 2022). There are indicators for the negative e-WOM variable, as follows: 1. Negative e-WOM Number, 2. Negative e-WOM Reliability, and 3. Negative e-WOM Retransmission Will (Li et al., 2015). Based on the research conducted by (Pierre & Mombeuil, 2025), these indicators are essential in assessing the impact of negative electronic word of mouth on consumer perceptions and decision-making processes.

H₂: Negative e-WOM have a positive effect on switching intention

Dissatisfaction

Dissatisfaction can be defined as a psychological expression of customers' negative feelings (Sun et al., 2017). Dissatisfaction occurs when customers receive products and services that differ from what they expected. There are four indicators of dissatisfaction, namely: 1.

Dissatisfaction with Product Quality, 2. Discrepancy Between Quality and Expectations, 3. Negative Experience, and 4. Perceived Complaints (Al-Banna & Jannah, 2023).

Research conducted by Chen et al. (2024), Mu & Lee (2022) also indicates that dissatisfaction can lead to switching intention among customers.

H₃: Dissatisfaction has a positive effect on switching intention

Alternative Attractiveness

Customers' perception of alternative attractiveness can be a strong factor in encouraging them to leave their current product brand. When alternatives are available, customers tend to compare those alternatives with their current brand. If the alternative is believed to better satisfy the customer's needs, then the customer will switch to that alternative (Liao et al., 2017). Customers are likely to switch to another product brand if the offered brand contains key aspects that are considered more attractive or better than the current one (L. Chen et al., 2023); (Sun et al., 2017).

According to H. T. Yi et al. (2023), there are three indicators of alternative attractiveness, namely: 1. the available alternative is better, 2. the available alternative is more beneficial, and 3. the available alternative is more satisfying. In a previous study conducted by H. T. Yi et al. (2023), alternative attractiveness was used as a moderating variable between opportunistic behavior and ex-post transaction costs, and how these variables influence termination intention. Therefore, in this study, alternative attractiveness will be included as a moderating variable.

H₄: Alternative attractiveness moderates the relationship between overclaims and switching intention.

H₅: Alternative attractiveness moderates the relationship between negative e-WOM and switching intention.

H₆: Alternative attractiveness moderates the relationship between dissatisfaction and switching intention.

This research is a study that explains the influence of one variable and another through a quantitative approach (Setiawan, 2019). In this study, the relationship between the variables will be explained through the effects of overclaims, negative e-WOM, and dissatisfaction on switching intention, with alternative attractiveness as the moderating variable.

The population refers to all individuals to whom the findings will be generalized. The population in this study consists of all users of local skincare brands. From this population, a sample is taken as a representative using a purposive sampling technique, in which the researcher selects the sample based on the following criteria:

1. Aged 18 years and above
(Minimum age considered capable of making independent purchasing decisions)
2. Have used local skincare brand products
3. Have experienced dissatisfaction with certain local skincare products
(For example, due to results not matching the claims, allergic reactions, or poor service quality)
4. Have read or been exposed to negative reviews (negative e-WOM) about local skincare products on social media, e-commerce sites, or review platforms
5. Have considered or actually switched to another skincare brand

According to Hair et al. (2013), it is recommended that the sample size in a study should be at least 100 respondents or more. In addition, the number of samples used in a study should be 5 to 10 times the number of question indicators to be analyzed. In this study, there are 17

indicator items, so the minimum number of samples used by the researcher is 17 indicator items multiplied by 8, resulting in a minimum of 136 samples.

The research data used in this study is primary data obtained directly by the researcher (Schindler, 2019). The primary data was collected through the distribution of questionnaires, both offline and online, with the online version conducted via Google Forms. The results of the questionnaire distribution were then classified into a modified Likert scale to facilitate data processing and analysis. The Likert scale used in this study consists of: 1) point 5 for Strongly Agree (SA); 2) point 4 for Agree (A); 3) point 3 for Neutral (N); 4) point 2 for Disagree (D); and point 1 for Strongly Disagree (SD).

This study was statistically tested using WarpPLS Version 8.0. PLS is characterized as the most suitable technique for predictive or exploratory modeling research. PLS is a multivariate statistical data analysis method that can be used for testing involving multiple response variables and explanatory variables simultaneously (Kaufmann & Kock, 2022).

The testing stages in WarpPLS include validity testing, reliability testing, model fit testing, and hypothesis testing. According to Kwong & Wong (2015), validity testing can be conducted using convergent validity and discriminant validity tests. For the convergent validity test, if the loading factor is greater than 0.7, the data can be considered valid. The second step involves calculating the AVE (Average Variance Extracted) for each construct. If the AVE value is above 0.5, it can be concluded that the statement items of the variable are valid. The second step is reliability testing. This test can be carried out using the Construct Reliability method for each variable. This testing involves the Cronbach's Alpha indicator. If the Cronbach's Alpha value is greater than 0.7, the data is considered reliable.

Model fit testing uses the goodness of fit index by examining the criteria of the Average Path Coefficient (APC), which aims to assess the strength of the relationship between variables. APC is considered ideal if the p-value is less than 0.05; conversely, if the p-value is greater than 0.05, it is considered not ideal. The Average R-Squared (ARS) value indicates the magnitude of exogenous, endogenous, and mediating variables. ARS is considered good if the p-value is less than 0.05. The Average Adjusted R-Squared (AARS) value is used to assess the adjusted ARS, and AARS is considered good if the p-value is less than 0.05. If all tests are fulfilled, the next step is hypothesis testing.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study utilized primary data obtained through the distribution of questionnaires conducted online using the Google Form platform. The total number of respondents successfully gathered for this research was 151 individuals. The respondents were classified into four main characteristics: gender, age, income level, and education level. The details of the respondents' characteristics are presented in the following table:

Table 1. Number of Questionnaires

No	Description	Respondents
1	The distributed questionnaire	Infinite
2	The completed questionnaire	151
3	Respondent rate	100%

Source: Processed Data (2025)

Based on the table above, the total number of respondents in this study was 151 individuals. Of that total, all 151 respondents completed the questionnaire, resulting in a response rate of 100%.

4.1 Demographic Description of Respondents

Table 2. Respondents by Gender

Gender	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Male	54	35,76
Female	97	64,24
Total	151	100

Source: Processed Data (2025)

Based on the table above, the total number of respondents in this study is 151 people. Of that number, 54 respondents are male, accounting for 35.76% of the total. Meanwhile, the remaining 97 respondents are female, making up 64.24%. From this data, it can be concluded that there are more female respondents than male respondents.

Table 3. Respondents Based on Age

Age	Number of Respondents	Percentage
17-25	145	96,03
26-35	5	3,31
>35	1	0,66
Total	151	100

Source: Processed Data (2025)

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the researcher divided the respondents' age demographics into three groups. In the 17–25 years age group, there are 145 respondents, representing 96.03%. The second group, aged 26–35 years, includes 5 respondents, which is 3.31%. Lastly, in the >35 years age group, there is 1 respondent, accounting for 0.66%. From this analysis, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents in this study are within the 17 to 25-year age range.

Table 4. Respondents Based on Income Level

Income Level	Number of Respondents	Percentage
<500.000	56	37,09
500.000-1.000.000	32	21,19
1.100.000-3.000.000	51	33,77
<3000.000	12	7,95
Total	151	100

Source: Processed Data (2025)

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the researcher divided the demographic variable of income level into four categories. First, income of less than Rp500,000 was reported by 56 respondents, representing 37.09%. Second, income between Rp500,000 and Rp1,000,000 was reported by 32 respondents, representing 21.19%. Third, income between Rp1,100,000 and Rp3,000,000 was reported by 51 respondents, representing 33.77%. Finally, income of more than Rp3,000,000 was reported by 12 respondents, representing 7.95%. From the above breakdown, it can be concluded that the majority of local skincare brand users fall within the income range of less than Rp500,000, with 56 respondents (37.09%).

4.2 Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Table 5. Descriptive Statistical Analysis

	Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Overclaim	151	2	5	4.38	.597
N-eWOM	151	2	5	4.46	.586
Dissatisfaction	151	3	5	4.65	.493
Switching	151	3	5	4.62	.563
Attractiveness	151	3	5	4.50	.552
Valid N (listwise)	151				

Source: Processed Data (2025)

Based on data from 151 respondents, all variables in this study have a mean score above 4, indicating that respondents tended to agree or strongly agree with the statements representing each construct.

- 1) Dissatisfaction has the highest average score (4.65), indicating a relatively high level of dissatisfaction with the experience of using local skincare brand products.
- 2) Switching Intention also shows a high average score (4.62), which means that many respondents have a tendency to switch to other brands.
- 3) Negative e-WOM and Alternative Attractiveness are also rated quite high (4.46 and 4.50, respectively), indicating the significant influence of negative reviews and the appeal of alternative brands.
- 4) Meanwhile, Overclaim has the lowest average score (4.38), yet it still falls within the high category, showing that most respondents feel that the promotional claims of local skincare brands are exaggerated.

In general, these results indicate that perceptions of overclaim, negative reviews, and dissatisfaction are quite strong and have the potential to encourage switching intentions, especially if other alternatives are perceived as more attractive.

4.3 Validity Test

According to Sholihin & Ratmono (2021) there are two ways to test validity: by examining *convergent validity* and *discriminant validity*. The purpose is to assess whether the indicators or items used to measure a construct (variable) are correlated or related appropriately.

Table 6. Results of Convergent Validity with Loading Factor

Variable	Loading Factor	Criteria	Result
Overclaims			
O.1	0,786	0,7	Valid
O.2	0,799	0,7	Valid
O.3	0,798	0,7	Valid
Negative Electronic Word of Mouth			
N-eWOM1	0,722	0,7	Valid
N-eWOM2	0,772	0,7	Valid
N-eWOM3	0,740	0,7	Valid
Dissatisfaction			
DIS1	0,810	0,7	Valid
DIS2	0,709	0,7	Valid
DIS3	0,787	0,7	Valid
DIS4	0,751	0,7	Valid
Switching Intention			
SI1	0,760	0,7	Valid
SI2	0,743	0,7	Valid
SI3	0,734	0,7	Valid
SI4	0,746	0,7	Valid
Alternative Attractiveness			
AA1	0,767	0,7	Valid
AA2	0,717	0,7	Valid
AA3	0,736	0,7	Valid

Source: Processed Data (2025)

Based on the table above, the results of the convergent validity test using the loading factor indicate that all statement items are considered valid because the loading factor values meet the criteria of >0.7 . Therefore, the statement indicators in this questionnaire can be used as accurate measurement tools.

Table 7. Results of Convergent Validity with AVE

Variable	AVE	Criteria	Result
Overclaims	0,633	0,5	Valid
Negative Electronic Word of Mouth	0,650	0,5	Valid
Dissatisfaction	0,524	0,5	Valid
Switching Intention	0,606	0,5	Valid
Alternative Attractiveness	0,660	0,5	Valid

Source: Processed Data (2025)

Based on the table above, the results of the convergent validity test using AVE indicate that all statement items are valid because the AVE values meet the criteria of >0.5 . Therefore, the statement indicators in this questionnaire can be used as accurate measurement tools.

4.4 Reliability Test

According to Sholihin & Ratmono (2021), this test aims to measure the reliability of the questionnaire statements. Therefore, it is expected that the statements in the study possess accuracy or data consistency. If the values of composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha for a variable are greater than 0.7, it can be concluded that the variable meets the reliability criteria.

Table 8. Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Criteria	Satisfaction
Overclaims	0,726	0,883	0,7	Reliabel
Negative Electronic Word of Mouth	0,767	0,897	0,7	Reliabel
Dissatisfaction	0,776	0,825	0,7	Reliabel
Switching Intention	0,906	0,929	0,7	Reliabel
Alternative Attractiveness	0,899	0,911	0,7	Reliabel

Source: Processed Data (2025)

From the table above, it can be concluded that the results of the reliability testing indicate that all statement items are reliable because the values of composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha meet the criteria of >0.7 . Thus, the statement indicators in this questionnaire can be used as measuring tools due to their consistency.

4.5 Model Fit Test

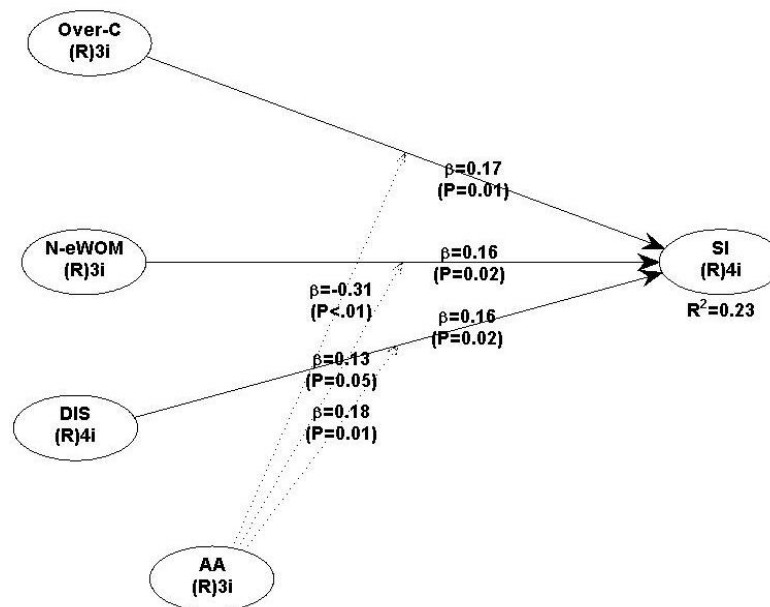
Table 9. Model Fit Test Results

Index	Criteria	Index	P-Value	Information
APC	$<0,05$	0,185	0,005	Model accepted
ARS	$<0,05$	0,227	$<0,001$	Model accepted
AARS	$<0,05$	0,195	$<0,001$	Model accepted
AVIF	Acceptable if ≤ 5 ideally $\leq 3,3$	4,607		Model accepted
AFVIF	Acceptable if ≤ 5 ideally $\leq 3,3$	2,238		Model accepted
GoF	$>0,36$	0,379		Model accepted
SPR	Acceptable if = 0,7, ideally = 1	1,000		Model accepted
RSCR	Acceptable if = 0,9, ideally = 1	1,000		Model accepted
SSR	Acceptable if = 0,7, ideally = 1	1,000		Model accepted
NLBCDR	Acceptable if = 0,7, ideally = 1	1,000		Model accepted

Source: Processed Data (2025)

Based on the data in the table, it is shown that the model is considered fit if the p-values for APC, ARS, and AARS are less than or equal to 0.05, where APC = 0.05, ARS = <0.001 , and AARS = <0.001 . In addition, an AVIF of 4.607 and an AFVIF of 2.238 indicate that the AVIF and AFVIF indexes are ideal because they are ≤ 3.3 . The GoF obtained is $0.379 > 0.36$, which means the applied model is appropriate. The indexes SPR = 1000, RSCR = 1000, SSR = 1000, and NLBCDR = 1000 indicate that there are no causality problems in the model. Therefore, it can be concluded that the model used in this study is appropriate and in accordance with the material, and can proceed to further testing.

4.6 Hypothesis Testing



Source: Processed Data (2025)

Figure 1. Path Test Results

Table 10. Hypothesis Testing Results

	Hypotheses	β	P Value	Description
H1	Overclaims → switching intention	0,17	0,014	Accepted
H2	Negative electronic word of mouth → switching intention	0,16	0,022	Accepted
H3	Dissatisfaction → switching intention	0,16	0,024	Accepted
H4	Overclaims → switching intention as moderated by alternative attractiveness	-0,31	<0,01	Rejected
H5	Negative electronic word of mouth → switching intention as moderated by alternative attractiveness	0,13	0,049	Accepted
H6	Dissatisfaction → switching intention as moderated by alternative attractiveness	0,18	0,013	Accepted

Source: Processed Data (2025)

The Influence of Overclaims on Switching Intention

The result of hypothesis 1, which examines the relationship between overclaims and switching intention, shows a beta coefficient (β) value of 0.17, indicating a positive effect. Meanwhile, the p-value result is 0.014, which is smaller than the alpha value (0.05). Referring to this result, overclaims have a positive and significant influence on switching intention, which means that hypothesis 1 is accepted.

The first hypothesis shows that overclaims have a positive effect on switching intention and is therefore accepted. Overclaims refer to exaggerated claims about the benefits of a product that do not fully align with reality (Jerrim et al., 2023). Exaggerated claims about the benefits of local skincare brands often trigger consumer doubts about the brand's credibility.

When consumers feel that the product promises do not match reality, it leads to disappointment, which may trigger the intention to try other local skincare brands perceived as more honest or realistic. In previous studies, the variable of overclaims was more often examined in relation to its effect on consumer trust (Sabilla Rachma & Borshalina, 2024).

The Influence of Negative Electronic Word of Mouth on Switching Intention

The results of Hypothesis 2, which examines the relationship between negative electronic word of mouth and switching intention, show a beta coefficient (β) value of 0.16, indicating that the hypothesis has a positive effect. Meanwhile, the p-value is 0.022, which is lower than the alpha value (0.05). Referring to these results, negative electronic word of mouth has a positive and significant influence on switching intention, meaning that Hypothesis 2 is accepted.

The second hypothesis indicates that negative electronic word of mouth has a positive effect on switching intention and is therefore accepted. According to Hancock et al. (2023), negative e-WOM can influence consumers to abandon problematic products and switch to alternatives that are perceived as better. The stronger the intensity of negative e-WOM, the lower the level of consumer trust in the product or brand. Negative electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) includes criticism, complaints, and unfavorable online reviews. Such content tends to raise consumer doubts, making prospective buyers more cautious and skeptical toward existing product brands in the market, especially due to concerns over the credibility, quality, and reliability of the associated websites (Arica et al., 2022).

Based on the research conducted by (Pierre & Mombeuil, 2025), negative e-WOM has a positive effect on switching intention.

The Influence of Dissatisfaction on Switching Intention

The results of Hypothesis 3, which examines the relationship between dissatisfaction and switching intention, show a beta coefficient (β) value of 0.16, indicating a positive effect. Meanwhile, the p-value is 0.024, which is lower than the alpha value (0.05). Referring to these results, dissatisfaction has a positive and significant effect on switching intention, meaning that Hypothesis 3 is accepted.

The third hypothesis indicates that dissatisfaction positively affects switching intention and is therefore accepted. Dissatisfaction can be defined as the psychological expression of a customer's negative feelings (Sun et al., 2017). It occurs when customers receive products or services that differ from what they expected. If consumers receive products that do not meet their expectations, it leads to disappointment, which in turn influences their intention to switch to another brand. Research conducted by (Mu & Lee, 2022); (T. Chen et al., 2024) also indicates that dissatisfaction can trigger switching intention among customers.

Alternative Attractiveness Moderates the Effect of Overclaims on Switching Intention

The result of hypothesis 4, which examines the relationship between overclaims and switching intention moderated by alternative attractiveness, shows a beta coefficient (β) of -0.31, indicating that the relationship has a negative impact. Meanwhile, the p-value result is <0.01, which is smaller than the alpha value (0.05). Based on these results, overclaims on switching intention are moderated by alternative attractiveness, which means that hypothesis 4 is rejected.

Hypothesis 4 indicates that the effect of overclaims on switching intention moderated by alternative attractiveness is rejected. Customers' perceptions of alternative attractiveness can be a strong factor in encouraging them to leave their current brand. When alternatives are available, customers tend to compare those alternatives with their current brand. If the

alternatives are believed to better fulfill customer needs, they are likely to switch to those alternatives (Liao et al., 2017). Therefore, when alternative brands in the market are unappealing or limited (low alternative attractiveness), customers have fewer options to switch to. If they feel deceived or disappointed due to exaggerated product claims (overclaims), their frustration intensifies. Since they cannot find better alternatives, their disappointment directly increases the intention to leave the brand. As a result, the switching intention becomes even stronger.

Alternative Attractiveness Moderates the Effect of Negative Electronic Word of Mouth on Switching Intention

The result of hypothesis 5, which examines the relationship between negative electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) and switching intention moderated by alternative attractiveness, shows a beta coefficient (β) of 0.13, indicating a positive impact. Meanwhile, the p-value is 0.049, which is smaller than the alpha value (0.05). Based on these results, the effect of negative e-WOM on switching intention is moderated by alternative attractiveness, which means that hypothesis 5 is accepted.

Hypothesis 5 shows that the effect of negative electronic word of mouth on switching intention moderated by alternative attractiveness is accepted. Customers' perceptions of alternative attractiveness can be a strong factor in encouraging them to leave their current brand. When alternatives are available, customers will compare those alternatives with the brand they are currently using. If the alternatives are believed to better satisfy customer needs, they are likely to switch (Liao et al., 2017). Therefore, when alternative attractiveness is high, consumers perceive that there are many appealing options available in the market. If they hear or read negative reviews about the brand they are currently using, they are more likely to switch brands quickly and confidently, knowing that better alternatives are available.

Alternative Attractiveness Moderates the Effect of Dissatisfaction on Switching Intention

The result of hypothesis 6, which connects dissatisfaction with switching intention moderated by alternative attractiveness, shows a beta coefficient (β) of 0.18, indicating that the hypothesized relationship has a positive effect. Meanwhile, the p-value is 0.013, which is lower than the alpha value of 0.05. Based on this result, it can be concluded that dissatisfaction toward switching intention is moderated by alternative attractiveness, meaning hypothesis 6 is accepted.

The sixth hypothesis shows that dissatisfaction toward switching intention moderated by alternative attractiveness is accepted. Customers' perception of alternative attractiveness can be a strong factor in encouraging them to leave their current brand. When alternatives are available, customers will compare them with their current product brand. If the alternative is believed to better satisfy their needs, customers will switch to that alternative (Liao et al., 2017). When alternative attractiveness is high, the influence of dissatisfaction on switching intention becomes stronger. In other words, when consumers feel dissatisfied and are aware of better options, they are more likely and quicker to decide to switch to another brand.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to explore how overclaims, negative electronic word of mouth (e-WOM), and dissatisfaction influence the switching intention among local skincare users, with alternative attractiveness serving as a moderating variable. Through quantitative analysis of 151 respondents using WarpPLS 8.0, several key conclusions were drawn.

The findings confirm that overclaims, negative e-WOM, and dissatisfaction each have a positive and significant impact on consumers' intention to switch brands. This suggests that when consumers perceive exaggerated product claims, encounter negative online reviews, or experience dissatisfaction, they become more inclined to consider switching to another brand.

Furthermore, the presence of a more attractive alternative strengthens the effect of negative e-WOM and dissatisfaction on switching intention. In other words, when consumers are presented with appealing alternatives, their dissatisfaction and exposure to negative reviews are more likely to translate into action.

Interestingly, the moderating role of alternative attractiveness weakens the impact of overclaims on switching intention. This implies that in the absence of a compelling alternative, overclaims become a stronger driver of switching intention, likely due to a sense of disappointment with no preferable substitute available.

From a theoretical perspective, the study contributes to the literature by introducing alternative attractiveness as a moderator in the relationship between negative brand perceptions and switching intention—an area that remains underexplored, particularly in the context of local skincare brands. On a practical level, the findings underscore the critical need for beauty industry players to manage consumer expectations and satisfaction, especially within today's highly competitive market.

However, several limitations should be noted. The sample size was relatively small and dominated by younger consumers aged 17–25, limiting the generalizability of the results across broader age groups. Additionally, since the data collection was conducted online, there is the possibility that certain demographics—such as consumers less active in digital spaces—were underrepresented. Lastly, switching intention was measured based on respondents' self-reported perceptions rather than observed behaviors, leaving room for potential discrepancies between intention and actual brand-switching actions.

Despite these limitations, which stem more from sampling design and behavioral measurement methods than methodological flaws, the study offers a solid foundation for further research. Future studies could adopt longitudinal or experimental approaches to investigate the link between switching intention and actual consumer behavior more robustly. Including other moderating or mediating variables—such as brand trust, brand loyalty, or service quality—could also provide deeper insight into switching dynamics. Lastly, local skincare brands are encouraged to avoid exaggerated marketing claims and to proactively manage their digital reputation in order to mitigate the adverse effects of negative e-WOM.

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