



## **The Impact of the Product Reputation on Purchase Intentions of Slimming Products Customers**

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## **The Impact of the Product Reputation on Purchase Intentions of Slimming Products Customers**

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### **Abstract:**

Drawing on signaling theory, this study aims to investigate the impact of slimming product reputation (PR) on developing purchase intentions (PIs). Convenience sampling was used to gather 400 electronic questionnaires to evaluate the measurement model and hypotheses with Smart-PLS 4.1.0.9. The results show that slimming product reputation has a significant impact on the dimensions of purchase intentions. Product reputation affected recommendation behavior, repurchase intention, and willingness to pay, respectively. Consequently, these results benefit managers and scholars alike. For academics, the study adds to the expanding body of research on product reputation. Furthermore, it is recommended that researchers investigate additional variables that either directly or indirectly influence PIs through mediating other variables. For managers, these results will help them when they are customizing their reputation tactics, and the results will lead them to focus their effort on building a good reputation for their products and being perceived as reliable and benevolent by customers.

**Keywords:** Product Reputation, Purchase Intentions, Signaling Theory, Slimming products

### **1. Introduction**

Due to the market's intrinsic inability to provide ideal information, consumers frequently use signals like PR as a compass when forming opinions and choosing which products willingness to buy (Henard & Dacin, 2010; Majid & Rhee, 2018). PR also helps external stakeholders appreciate the range of quality and performance of a specific product or service (Cavazos, Rutherford, & Shahzad, 2023). In doing so, it aids in the dispelling of uncertainties that target consumers may have and increases their willingness to buy or use a product (Sánchez-Iglesias, García-Madariaga, & Jerez, 2024).

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PR affects the reputation of the company as a whole. While CR evaluated the company overall (managerial capability, financial capability, strategy, location, and social responsibility), PR evaluated the quality of a specific product of this company. CR and PR interest stakeholders and affect their behavioral intentions but take different angles on corporate performance and image (Cavazos, Rutherford, & Shahzad, 2023).

The primary focus of firms and their marketing activities is sales increase. Purchase intention, or a consumer's readiness to buy a product at a specific time (Tiwari et al., 2024), is one of the key factors for the firm. It is an introduction of actual buying behavior and is useful in predicting the probability that a customer will make a purchase in a given period (Le et al., 2024).

Self-medication is responsible for the growing global consumption figures for over the counter (OTC) slimming products. OTC product sales have increased due to self-medication, as consumers are able to assess value, count benefits, and choose based on their own information (Salman Unver, Sezgin, & Uray, 2023).

Previous literature has shown that PIs are affected by PR based on signaling theory. For example, PI is influenced by change in corporate reputation (Balakrishnan & Foroudi., 2020) Similarly, specific dimensions of PI are affected by reputation; for instance, repurchase and Recommendation behavior (Maden et al., 2012; Walsh et al., 2009; Foroudi, 2019) and WTP (Graham & Bansal, 2007; Keh and Xie (2009) are significantly affected by reputation.

An overview of the research issue was provided in the previous section. There are seven sections in the paper. The conceptual framework and the development of the hypotheses are presented in the second section. The approach used for this investigation is provided in the third section. The analysis is presented in the fourth section. The research's conclusions are presented in the fifth section. The theoretical and practical ramifications are illustrated in the sixth part. The limits and possible future research directions are finally covered in the seventh section.

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## **2. Conceptual framework model and hypotheses**

### ***2.1 Corporate reputation***

Corporate Reputation (CR) has received significant attention from scholars across economics, organizational theory, and marketing since the 1950s (Gli et al., 2024; Maden et al., 2012). Within the management disciplines, multiple scholars have put forth their interpretations of CR. CR or a "collective construct that describes the aggregate perceptions of multiple stakeholders about a company's performance" (Fombrun et al., 2000) is shaped by the perceptions held by stakeholders. The other definition of CR is a collective assessment of a company's ability to provide valued outcomes to a representative group of stakeholders (Fombrun et al., 2000), which is concerned with the company's capacity to fulfill stakeholder expectations (Dalla-Pria & Rodríguez-de-Dios, 2022). While there is no agreement on a precise definition of CR (Caruana et al., 2006; Cintamür, 2023), all definitions agree on a set of characteristics that distinguish CR as an intangible asset and stable over time depending on past and present factors (Cintamür, 2023; Wepener & Boshoff, 2015). The definition most closely related to marketing and the customer, in particular, "the customer's overall evaluation of a firm based on his or her reactions to the firm's goods, services, communication activities, interactions with the firm and/or its representatives or constituencies (such as employees, management, or other customers), and/or known corporate activities" (Walsh and Beatty, 2007).

#### ***2.1.1 Product reputation (PR)***

PR considered one of the strategic resources that lead to competitive advantage (Barney, 1991; Hanfan, Setiawan, & Nopus, 2019). There are three types of reputations. First, PR which deals with how the public views the quality of a given product. Second, CR is the information on the sort of firm, such as factory capability, managerial capability, financial capability, strategy, location, and social responsibility. Third, company culture pertains to the beliefs and values within the work environment (Weigelt & Camerer, 1988); Hanfan, Setiawan, & Nopus, 2019).

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Moreover, Yoo et al., (2000) distinguished product reputation from corporate reputation. Depending on the temporal characteristics, CR grows over time and is less receptive to change (Eisenbeiss et al., 2014) while PR is created in a short time and is changeable. The reputation of the corporation tops the product and frequently continues to exist after the product has been phased out of the market (Majid & Rhee, 2018). Cavazos, Rutherford, and Shahzad (2023) also asserts that different products within a company can have varying reputations based on their individual attributes and performance.

In the context of slimming products, reliability and benevolence of the product are important as two dimensions of PR (Foroudi, 2019). Reliability (R) is more related to the risk mitigation associated with the product name (DelVecchio, 2000) but benevolence (B) related to Genuine concern for the interests of customers and doing what is best for them (Xie & Peng, 2009).

## ***2.2 Purchase intention (PI)***

The term "purchase intention" was used by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) to refer to the consumer's intent toward purchasing a particular product. Spears and Singh (2004) also defined PI as "the conscious plan or intention of a consumer to try to buy a product". Also, it is specified as "The willingness of a consumer to buy a product" (Pickett & Brison, 2019). Moreover, studies by Lu, Chang, and Chang (2014) and Tiwari, Kumar, Kant, and Jaiswal (2024) suggest that PI is the willingness of a consumer to buy a particular product at a particular time or situation. In addition, online purchase intention primarily focuses on whether consumers plan to buy a specific product via online transaction platforms (Pavlou, 2003).

PI acts as a key indicator for businesses as it helps predict the likelihood of a purchase in a certain timeframe and acts as a deputy for genuine behavior (Saleem, Ishaq, Raza, & Junaid, 2024). Literature has examined purchase intentions from two perspectives. First, the tendency to repurchase a product, and this perspective is linked to post-purchase behaviors, reflects the extent to which the product meets the needs, desires and requirements of the customer. Second, the probability that a customer will choose a particular product, and this perspective is linked to the general consumer preferences regardless of whether

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the consumer is a regular customer or not (Bianchi, Bruno, & Sarabia-Sanchez, 2019).

The study of Saleem et al. (2024) set apart two types of behavioral intents: Economic and social (Smith et al., 1995). First, it deals with repurchase intention or loyalty and willingness to pay (WTP) (economic behavioral intents), which has a direct effect on the vendor's earnings (Zhang & Bloemer, 2008). Second, social behavioral intentions (recommendation and complaint behavior) are linked to consumers' cognitive reactions about the goods or services that are being offered (Tax et al., 1998). Zeithaml et al. (1996) and Zhang and Bloemer (2008) measured PI by three dimensions (Repurchase intention (RI), Willingness to pay more (WTP), and Recommendation behavior (RB)).

As recommended by Theory of reasoned action (TRA) and Theory of planned behavior (TPB), consumer attitudes largely influence on their intention of behavior that will impact on purchase actions (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Over-the-counter purchase motivators of consumer are their positive attitudes toward it (Salman Unver, Sezgin & Uray.,2023). Factors such as price consciousness, a rational consideration that motivates consumer choice, or more situation specific health awareness- can both shape attitudes, while knowledge levels can also serve as an individual factor impacting perceived behavioral control.

### ***2.3 The relationship between PR and PI***

Researchers have depended on signaling theory to explain the relationship between reputation and purchase intentions. The theory posits that people use signals form clear elements to infer unclear elements especially when information is asymmetrical (Spence, 1973). PR acts as a signal to stakeholders, creates perceptions of performance, shaping stakeholder decisions. Stakeholders utilize these signals to appraise both the quality and reliability of a product (Cavazos, Rutherford, & Shahzad, 2023).

Consumer decision-making may be affected by product reputation in a variety of different and distinctive ways. The findings of Zeithaml's (1988) study

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revealed that the perceived quality of the product and its reputation have a strong effect on consumer purchase decisions.

Furthermore, Walsh, Mitchell, Jackson, and Beatty (2009) continue to elucidate that customers are more likely to realize improved quality and value when they consider a product or service has a good reputation, which increases their gladness with their purchases (loyalty), recommend by spreading positive WOM about it. Consequently, it is probable that if consumers have favorable feelings, and Preferred attributes evaluations towards product reliability and benevolence, this will have a favorable impact on re-purchase, loyalty, and recommendation responses (Foroudi, 2019).

Moreover, Jung and Seock (2016) showed that poor CR significantly worsens consumers' attitudes and intent to buy. Brand reputation has also been highlighted as a paramount indicator for the quality of a core product, given its demonstrated superiority in predicting customers' behavioral intentions over traditional measures such as satisfaction or quality (Selnes, 1993).

Reputation should always be good because it signals trustworthiness which then acts as risk mitigation on purchasing decisions and endorsing an increase of PI (Baumgartner, Ernst, & Fischer, 2020). In the automotive industry, customer perceptions of PR influence their purchase or other engagement behaviors based on the firm's adherence to implicit expectation promises (Sánchez-Iglesias, García-Madariaga, & Jerez, 2024).

Researchers in reputation assert that customers' perceptions of PR reduces their fears and concerns about the company's products and services (Eren, 2021). Consumers are able to make more reliable endings about a company's products and the feeling that will come with using the product if they are better informed about CR (Nguyen & Leblanc, 2001). As such, reputation ensures safety and certainty for customers (Cintamur & Yeuksel, 2018) and stimulates product selection by exemplifying excellence and moral business conduct (Cowan & Guzman, 2020).

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As the study by Gatti, Caruana, and Snehota (2012) provided, based on the planned behavior theory, a positive correlation between CR (attitude) and consumers' buying intention, whereby it is assumed that attitudes toward certain behaviors are composed of certain intentions (Ajzen, 1991). On the other hand, it has also been found that favorable consumer attitudes and consumer responses towards corporate social responsibility activities are advanced by strong CR (Kim & Ferguson, 2019).

Customers are prepared to pay extra (Graham & Bansal, 2007), are unlikely to complain to parties outside the company (Tosun & Yanar Gürce., 2024), are unlikely to spread unfavorable word of mouth, and are expected to make another purchase (Nikbin et al., 2011) for products with superb reputations.

In addition, Maden et al. (2012) reinforce the assertion that CR positively correlates with customer response. He asserted that the higher the reputation, the better the satisfaction, loyalty, commitment, and PI, and the lower the switching costs that customers will exhibit. This is further amplified by Keh and Xie (2009), whose empirical results extending CR to purchase intention and WTP price premium contend that customers' trust, customer identification, and customer commitment have important mediating roles in the stimulation of PIs. CR was also established to have a positive correlation with the behavioral intentions of present clients and the public (Shamma & Hassan, 2009).

Further, Balakrishnan and Foroudi (2020) found that CR has a considerable impact on PI in the food industry. Similarly, the relationship between perceived service quality, website reputation, and online purchase intention is mediated by trust (Qalati et al., 2021). A study by Elvin et al. (2024) proved that brand reputation moderates the relationship between electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) and PI, such that this connection becomes significantly stronger with a more positive brand reputation.

PR is measured by online product reviews. Floyd et al. (2014) found sales can be significantly affected by PR (product reviews) in their meta-analysis. In different contexts and independent of product types, methodological techniques, and geographical locations, exactly alike findings occur. In the same way, Abrate and Viglia (2019) discovered that PR has a crucial role in reducing the disparity

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between potential and actual return in the sharing economy when comparing individual revenue performance.

Finally, Román, Riquelme, and Iacobucci (2023) claim that the relationship between review credibility and PI is mediated by brand reputation, with an attenuated effect on experience products than on search products.

While previous literature has investigated the impact of reputation in services (Walsh, Mitchell, Jackson, & Beatty, 2009) and some industries such as automotive (Sánchez-Iglesias, García-Madariaga, & Jerez, 2024) and food (Balakrishnan & Foroudi, 2020), To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there is no study that shows the impact of PR on PI in the slimming context. This gap in literature forms the basis for the research problem to assess the extent to which the reputation of slimming product affects RI, RB, and WTP. According to the previous discussion of the literature review, the researchers assume that:

***H1: Product reputation has a significant positive effect on dimensions of PI***

*H1a: Product reputation has a significant positive effect on RI*

*H1b: Product reputation has a significant positive effect on RB*

*H1c: Product reputation has a significant positive effect on WTP*

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Data Collection**

This study was conducted using analytical descriptive research. A questionnaire-based methodology was used to poll customers of slimming products in Egypt to collect data. The variables were adapted based on previous research. The questionnaire was divided into two segments. Participants' demographic data was gathered in the first segment. Respondents were asked to evaluate the statements that represent each variable (PR, PI) in the second segment. The content of the questionnaire was assessed by academic specialists prior to being distributed to respondents. Each item was given a five-point Likert scale.

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The survey questionnaire was used to gather empirical data from customers who used slimming products. This study depends on convenience sampling to collect the questionnaires. Due to the lack of a sampling frame, researchers typically employ convenience sampling. Google Forms was used to make the survey accessible, and it was disseminated on Facebook, Telegram, and WhatsApp. The number of responses was 400.

There has been a demographic analysis of the data set. According to the data, 64.3% of responders were women, and 35.8% were men. Most respondents (48.8%) are between 18 and below 20, hold a bachelor's degree (79.3%), and are single (82.8%). The largest segment of the participants (68.3%) earns below 5000 Egyptian pounds per month. Table 1 displays the demographics of the respondents.

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Table 1: Sample demographics

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	143	35.8
	Female	257	64.3
	Total	400	100.0
Age	18 to below 20 years old	195	48.8
	20 to below 30 years-old	155	38.8
	30 to below 40 years-old	27	6.8
	40 to below 50 years-old	21	5.3
	50 years-old and more	2	.5
	Total	400	100.0
Education	Below Bachelor's degree	23	5.8
	Bachelor's degree	317	79.3
	Post graduates	60	15.0
	Total	400	100.0
Marital status	Single	331	82.8
	Married	64	16.0
	Divorced	3	.8
	separated	2	.5
	Total	400	100.0
Income	Below 5000 L.E	273	68.3
	5000 to less than 10000 L.E	73	18.3
	10000 to less than 15000 L.E	22	5.5
	15000 L.E and more	32	8.0
	Total	400	100.0

### **3.2 Measurements**

The scales used in the questionnaire were adapted from past studies. The questionnaire consists of 17 items. This study categorizes product reputation into Reliability (R) and Benevolence (B) adapted from Foroudi (2019) because the sentences are more suitable for study in the slimming context (see table 2). PI was measured using the Zhang and Bloemer (2008) scale with three dimensions (RI, RB, and WTP) (see table 3). The Likert scale has items ranging from 1

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(strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The appendix contains information on the questionnaire in Arabic.

Table 2: The Measurement Items of product reputation.

Construct	Measurement Items
Reliability	1. I think the slimming product offers reliable promises for future effectiveness.
	2. Based on my experience, I trust this slimming product.
	3. The results and benefits provided by this slimming product are reliable.
	4. Using this slimming product would help avoid the problems I may have if I purchased another slimming product.
Benevolence	5. I expect that this slimming product is designed to effectively support and assist me in achieving my weight loss goals.
	6. I expect that this slimming product is created with good intentions to benefit users like me.
	7. I expect that this product is designed with benevolent intentions to genuinely benefit its users.
	8. I expect that this slimming product is formulated with the users' best interests as the priority.
	9. I expect that this slimming product is well-meaning, reflecting care and responsibility toward its users.

**Source:** prepared by researcher according to Foroudi (2019)

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Table 3: The Measurement Items of purchase intention.

Construct	Measurement Items
Repurchase Intention	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. I consider this slimming product my first choice compared to other products.</li><li>2. If I had to choose again, I would still choose this slimming product.</li><li>3. I plan to use this slimming product again if I need it in the future.</li></ol>
Recommendation behavior	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>4. I will recommend this slimming product to my friends and family.</li><li>5. I would recommend that someone use this slimming product.</li><li>6. I would encourage friends and family to try this slimming product.</li></ol>
Willingness to pay	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>7. I am willing to continue using this slimming product, even if its price increases.</li><li>8. I am willing to pay a higher price for this slimming product compared to other similar products, due to its benefits.</li></ol>

**Source:** prepared by researcher according to Zhang and Bloemer (2008)

#### **4. Data Analysis**

The data from the study were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The quantitative data produced by the questionnaire was analyzed using two software applications, Smart PLS 4.1.0.9 and SPSS Version 30. The lack of normality of the data led the researcher to use SEM.

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## **4. 1 Measurement Model**

### **4.1.1 Reliability and validity**

The model measurement should be evaluated through four steps (Hair et al., 2019). First, indicator loadings should be greater than 0.708 to explain more than 50% of the indicator's variance (Hair et al., 2021). Table 2 shows that all loadings are above the recommended threshold. In the second step, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability were assessed. The minimum acceptable value of Cronbach's alpha and CR is 0.7 (Hair et al., 2021). Table 4 demonstrates that every value was within the acceptable threshold. Third, a concept's convergent validity for every item on every construct is assessed using the average variance extracted (AVE). Table 2 shows that every value exceeds the recommended threshold of 0.5 (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 4: Validity and reliability results

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HOC	Variable	Item	loadings	Cronbach's alpha	CR	AVE
<b>Cut-off</b>			<b>&gt; 0.708</b>	<b>&gt; 0.6</b>	<b>&gt; 0.7</b>	<b>&gt; 0.5</b>
<b>PR</b>	Benevolence	B1	0.858	0.938	0.953	0.802
		B2	0.892			
		B3	0.919			
		B4	0.903			
		B5	0.906			
	Reliability	R1	0.881	0.896	0.928	0.762
		R2	0.865			
		R3	0.885			
		R4	0.862			
	<b>PI</b>	Recommendation Behavior	RB1	0.947	0.936	0.959
RB2			0.938			
RB3			0.94			
Repurchase intention		RI1	0.916	0.884	0.928	0.812
		RI2	0.902			
		RI3	0.885			
Willingness to pay		WTP1	0.947	0.879	0.943	0.892
	WTP2	0.942				

In the fourth stage, the discriminant validity was assessed using the HTMT ratio and the Fornell and Larcker criterion. If the square root of the AVE for each component is greater than the correlation between the components, discriminant validity is realized (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The square root of AVE for each construct (bold) was shown to be stronger than its relationship with other constructs (Table 5). Discriminant validity has been proven, as indicated by the HTMT ratio of correlation assessment, where all values in Table 6 are less than 0.9 (Henseler et al., 2015).

Table 5: Fornell and Larcker criterion

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	B	R	RB	RI	WTP
B	<b>0.896</b>				
R	0.820	<b>0.873</b>			
RB	0.715	0.708	<b>0.942</b>		
RI	0.722	0.736	0.809	<b>0.901</b>	
WTP	0.627	0.660	0.754	0.731	<b>0.944</b>

Table 6: HTMT

	B	R	RB	RI	WTP
B					
R	0.893				
RB	0.762	0.771			
RI	0.792	0.825	0.889		
WTP	0.689	0.743	0.830	0.829	

The study's higher-order construct, PR, was based on two lower-order constructs: Benevolence and Reliability. In the study, PR was assessed as a higher-order Reflective-Formative construct. To demonstrate the higher-order validity, VIF values, Outer Weights, and Outer Loadings were assessed (see Table 7). For the two lower-order constructs, the outer weights were significant, and the outer loadings were higher than the recommended cutoff of 0.5 (Hair et al., 2019). There is no collinearity issue in the study because the VIF values for the formative higher-order construct of PR were below the necessary threshold of 5. Hair et al.(2021) stated that the formatively measured construct and the reflectively rated items should have a correlation of at least 0.708. This means that at least half of the variance (50%) in the alternative measure can be explained by the construct. For the PR construct, this study yields a path coefficient of 0.758, above the recommended cutoff of 0.708.

Table 7: HOC Validity of PR

Higher order construct	Lower order construct	Redundancy Analysis	VIF	Outer Weights	T statistics	Outer loadings	P value
PR	R	0.758	2.929	0.550	3.890	0.956	0.000
	B		2.929	0.500	3.504	0.947	0.000

On the other hand, the endogenous variable PI was the study's higher-order construct, which was predicated on three lower-order constructs:

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recommendation behavior, repurchase intention, and willingness to pay. In this paper, PI was assessed as a reflective-reflective higher-order construct. To demonstrate the higher-order validity, the factor loadings, validity, and reliability were assessed. All the PI indicators' factor loadings exceed the 0.5 minimum permissible value (Hair et al., 2019). There were no items removed due to low factor loadings. Cronbach's alphas and composite reliability were employed to assess reliability; both metrics' statistics exceeded the recommended value of 0.7 for the higher-order construct (see Table 8), indicating acceptable reliability (Henseler et al., 2015). The higher-order construct's AVE was more than 0.5, so convergent validity was considered acceptable. The discriminant validity was achieved by calculating the Fornell and Larcker Criterion and HTMT. Table 9 shows that the HTMT ratio is below the required cutoff of 0.9.

Table 8: Factor loadings, Reliability, and AVE for HOC (PI)

	Outer Loadings	Cronbach Alpha	CR	AVE
RB <- PI	0.916	0.903	0.939	0.837
RI <- PI	0.912			
WTP <- PI	0.917			

Table 9: Discriminant validity for HOC (PI)

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Fornell and Larcker Criterion			
	B	R	PI
PI	0.658	0.652	0.915
HTMT			
PI	0.712	0.723	

### 4.1.2 Structural Model Assessment

The structural path is assessed following the evaluation of the measurement model. This stage includes the following: construct collinearity, predictive relevance, and coefficient of determination. The first step was to assess the collinearity issue using the variance inflation factor (VIF). Every latent variable should have VIF values below the (5) cutoff (Kock, 2015). The fact that every number in Table 10 ranged from 2.788 to 2.944 indicates that there is no issue with collinearity among the constructs.

Table 10: Constructs collinearity

	VIF
B	2.929
R	2.929
RB	2.878
RI	2.788
WTP	2.944

Second, applying Stone-Q2 Geisser's approach (Geisser, 1975) to evaluate the predictive relevance. Table 8 shows that the Q2 values of RB, RI, and WTP are 0.336, 0.367, and 0.333, respectively, which is more than zero and indicates that the model has a significant predictive power.

The evaluation of the endogenous R2 value is the last stage. Higher R2 values, which range from 0 to 1, indicate greater explanatory powers (Hair et al., 2019). Chin (1998) classified endogenous variables in the structural model as significant, moderate, or weak based on their respective R<sup>2</sup> values of 0.67, 0.33, and 0.19. As seen in Table 11, where the R<sup>2</sup> values of RB, RI, and WTP are 0.348, 0.378, and 0.345, respectively. Thus, a moderate level of predictive power was shown by all PI dimensions.

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Table 11: Predictive relevance and coefficient of determination

	Q <sup>2</sup> predict	R-square adjusted
RB	0.336	0.348
RI	0.367	0.378
WTP	0.333	0.345

## 4.2 Model outcomes

The hypotheses were investigated via PLS-PM. The first hypothesis assesses whether product reputation significantly and positively impacts purchase intention. The findings of H1a showed that product reputation had a significant impact on RB ( $\beta = 0.591$ ,  $t = 15.827$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Hence, H1a was supported. H1b evaluates whether product reputation significantly and positively impacts RI. The findings showed that RI was significantly impacted by product reputation ( $\beta = 0.616$ ,  $t = 19.549$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Hence, H1b was supported. H1c evaluates whether product reputation significantly and positively impacted WTP. The findings showed that product reputation significantly affected WTP ( $\beta = 0.588$ ,  $t = 16.042$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Hence, H1c was supported. Results of testing hypotheses are shown in Table 12. The structural model findings are depicted in Figure 1.

Table 12: Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis1	B	SD	T statistics	P values	Decision
a PR -> RB	0.591	0.037	15.827	0.000	Supported
b PR -> RI	0.616	0.032	19.549	0.000	Supported
c PR -> WTP	0.588	0.037	16.042	0.000	Supported

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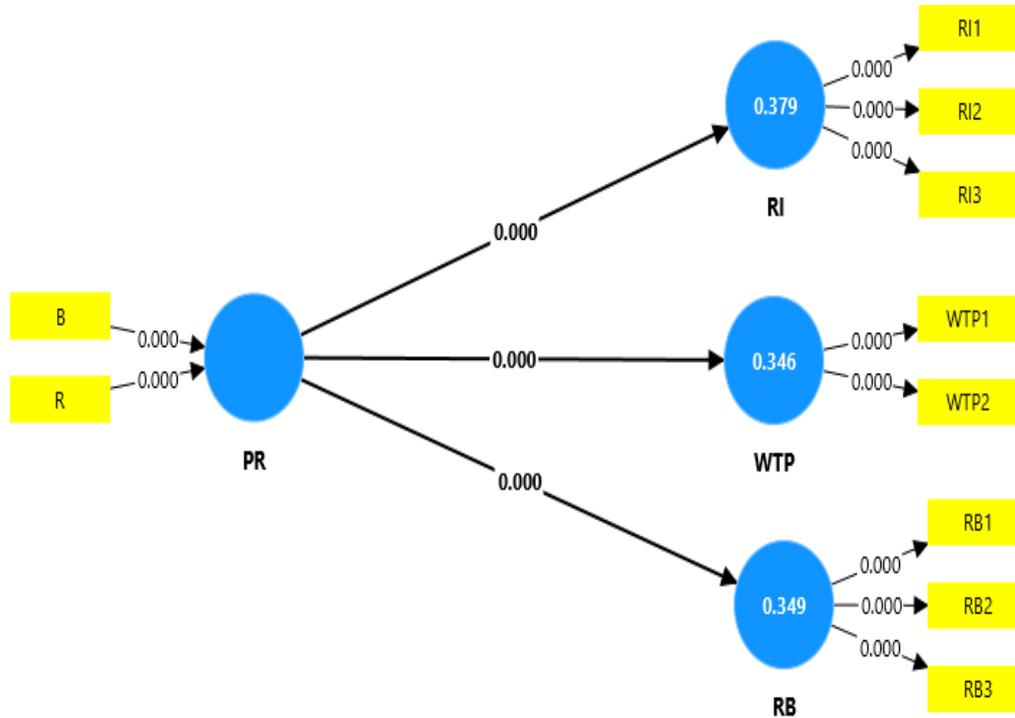


Figure 1: structural model

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

Due to the nature of slimming products, their reputation is often linked to the product itself more than to the company's reputation, as the product's reputation, as we mentioned previously, is built in the short term and is linked to each person individually and can be changed easily (Cintamür, 2023; Wepener & Boshoff, 2015). Therefore, the study focuses on the reputation of the slimming product and its relationship with purchase intentions.

In the context of slimming products, risk cannot be totally removed, so it's critical to have a cue to lessen transaction uncertainty and information asymmetry. This research uncovers the role of product reputation as a cue to affect customer purchase intentions. The theoretical framework, based on the signaling theory (Baumgartner, Ernst, & Fischer, 2020; Maden et al., 2012;

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Sánchez-Iglesias, García-Madariaga, & Jerez, 2024), suggests that consumers consider the reputation of specific product during the purchase process.

The study of Baumgartner, Ernst, and Fischer (2020) concluded that when reputation perceived as good it signals trustworthiness, mitigate risks related to the product, and endorsing PIs. Moreover, Sánchez-Iglesias, García-Madariaga, and Jerez (2024) asserted the findings as the perceptions of PR would influence customers' purchases or other engagement behaviors based on the promises they expected from this reputation, as they see the reputation as an implicit promise to provide a good product. Also, Maden et al. (2012) showed that customers who perceive CR are also more likely to believe that the products they buy from the companies are of high quality, which raises their degree of satisfaction and strengthens commitment and loyalty. Individuals that express higher levels of commitment and loyalty also share their experiences with others to benefit the firm. Those studies support the result that product reputation had a large impact on purchase intentions (supporting H1).

This outcome was also consistent with other earlier research findings. For instance, Walsh et al. (2007) asserted that customers derive higher quality and/or value from good reputation; they feel highly pleased with the product they purchased. This reputation also signals its reliability in market transactions; thereby, a better reputation enhances loyalty intentions or repurchase intention (supporting H1a) (Bartikowski et al., 2011), which subsequently encourages positive WOM (supporting H1b) (Maden et al., 2012; Foroudi, 2019) and increases their desire to pay more for these products (supporting H1c) (Graham & Bansal, 2007; Keh and Xie, 2009).

The explanation for this outcome is that the PIs of customers are impacted by prior experiences with the slimming product based on their personal or other experiences. This means that the product is reliable and safe and can be depended on for its reputation to make people think of purchasing it again if they need it, recommend it to others, and pay more as the customers see it serve.

## **6. Managerial and theoretical Implications**

Although corporate reputation has been discussed in most of the literature as a strategic development and performance of an organization, little emphasis has been placed on understanding the role of reputation with regard to particular products (Balakrishnan & Foroudi, 2020). This study adds to the body of knowledge on PI and PR. First, given that PR is still a relatively important term for companies and for customers, this study extends the relationship to the

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slimming context as a serious context that a decision about it will affect customers' health. Second, the study adds other insights regarding the drivers of the dimensions of purchase intentions.

For managers looking to improve PR, this study offers some recommendations. The most critical factor is to foster PR, reliability and benevolence is more important for slimming products. First, managers should care more about reliability which means that more attention to the quality, effectiveness, and safety of these products by acquiring a license from the Egyptian Drug Authority because of their adverse effects that may impact consumers' health. Second, caring about benevolence by providing an effective product to consumers that proves the good faith of the company and assures product reputation.

Moreover, extensive advertising can improve PR in the customer's mind (Seeletse, 2016). customers can remember the slimming product when they are exposed to advertising of this product, thus enhances their perception of the slimming product's value. Consequently, customers may view the slimming product as worth purchasing it.

## **7. Limitations and Future Research**

It is important to acknowledge certain limitations with respect to the current study. First, a cross-sectional approach was taken in the study. Future research may benefit from longitudinal designs. Second, the study used convenience sampling, which limits how broadly the results can be applied; future research may employ different sample strategies. Third, the study was applied to slimming product; future studies can be applied to other medical drugs or products. Fourth, the study's generalizability to other nations was limited because it was carried out in Egypt. Fifth, future studies could look into potential mediators that could help explain how PR and PIs are related. Sixth, this study did not consider concentrating on the clients' real behaviors. Customers' intentions often influence their actual actions. Therefore, future research might think about focusing on real consumer behavior.

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### Appendix 1:

The scales used for measuring PR and PIs

a) Product reputation adapted from Foroudi (2019)

#### سمعة المنتج

##### البعد الأول: المصادقية

١. أعتقد أن هذا المنتج يقدم وعودًا صادقة لتحقيق نتائج فعالة في المستقبل.
٢. أعتقد أن هذا المنتج موثوق به، بناءً على تجربتي.
٣. يقدم هذا المنتج نتائج وفوائد موثوق بها.
٤. يساعدني استخدام هذا المنتج في تجنب المشاكل التي قد أعاني منها لو اشتريت منتج تخسيس آخر.

##### البعد الثاني: الأمان

١. أتوقع أن هذا المنتج مصمم لدعمي ومساعدتي بفعالية في تحقيق أهدافي في إنقاص الوزن.
٢. أعتقد أن هذا المنتج قد تم تصنيعه بنوايا حسنة لتقديم فوائد ملموسة للمستخدمين مثلي.
٣. أتوقع أن هذا المنتج مصمم بنوايا صادقة ليقدم فوائد ملموسة للمستخدمين.
٤. أعتقد أن هذا المنتج مطور بشكل يراعي ما يهدف له.
٥. أرى أن هذا المنتج يراعي الجوانب الأخلاقية والتي يحرص عليها مستخدميه.

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b) Purchase intentions adapted from Zhang and Bloemer (2008)

نية الشراء
البعد الأول: تكرار الشراء
١. أعتبر هذا المنتج خيارى الأول مقارنة بالمنتجات الأخرى.
٢. إذا كان أمامي بدائل أخرى، سأختار نفس المنتج.
٣. سأشتري هذا المنتج إذا احتجت إليه في المستقبل.
البعد الثاني: الاستعداد للدفع
٤. أرب في الاستمرار في استخدام هذا المنتج لفقدان وزني حتى وإن ارتفع سعره
٥. أنا مستعد لدفع سعر أعلى لهذا المنتج مقارنة بالمنتجات المماثلة بسبب فوائده.
البعد الثالث: سلوك التوصية
٦. سأوصي بهذا المنتج لأصدقائي وعائلتي.
٧. سأوصي أي شخص باستخدام هذا المنتج للتخسيس.
٨. سأشجع الأصدقاء والأقارب على تجربة هذا المنتج

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## تأثير سمعة المنتج على نوايا شراء عملاء منتجات التخسيس

المستخلص:

بالاعتماد على نظرية الإشارة، تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التحقيق في تأثير سمعة منتج التخسيس على نوايا الشراء. تم جمع بيانات الدراسة بالاعتماد على عينة ميسرة لجمع ٤٠٠ استبانة الكترونية لتقييم نموذج القياس والفرضيات باستخدام Smart-PLS 4.1.0.9. تظهر النتائج أن سمعة منتج التخسيس لها تأثير كبير على أبعاد نوايا الشراء. أثرت سمعة المنتج على سلوك التوصية ونية تكرار الشراء والاستعداد للدفع على التوالي. وبالتالي، تفيد هذه النتائج المديرين والعلماء على حد سواء. بالنسبة للأكاديميين، تضيف الدراسة إلى مجموعة الأبحاث المتوسعة حول سمعة المنتج. علاوة على ذلك، يوصى بأن يقوم الباحثون بالتحقيق في المتغيرات الإضافية التي تؤثر بشكل مباشر أو غير مباشر على نوايا الشراء من خلال استخدام متغيرات وسيطة في العلاقة. بالنسبة للمديرين، ستساعد هذه النتائج عندما يقومون بإنشاء وتقوية السمعة الخاصة بهم، وستفودهم النتائج إلى تركيز جهودهم على بناء سمعة جيدة لمنتجاتهم وإدراكها على أنها ذو مصداقية وأمنة من قبل العملاء.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

سمعة المنتج، نوايا الشراء، نظرية الإشارة، نية تكرار الشراء، سلوك التوصية، الرغبة في الدفع، منتجات التخسيس