



Repurchase Intention after Viral Food Safety-Related Concerns: The Mediating Role of Brand Trust in Online Customer Review and Product Quality

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ABSTRACT

This study examines repurchase intention toward Bika Ambon Ci Mehong after viral food safety-related concerns by analyzing online customer review, product quality, and brand trust. A quantitative survey was conducted with 112 respondents and analyzed using PLS-SEM. The results show that online customer review and product quality positively affect both brand trust and repurchase intention. Brand trust also positively influences repurchase intention. Furthermore, brand trust partially mediates the effects of online customer review and product quality on repurchase intention. These findings indicate that repurchase intention is shaped not only by favorable reviews and perceived product quality, but also by trust restoration after food safety concerns

INTRODUCTION

The growth of the food industry has been increasingly shaped by changes in consumer lifestyles, the expansion of digital commerce, and the growing influence of social media on consumer evaluation and purchase behavior. In the snack and local food market, consumers are no longer influenced only by taste and convenience, but also by digital exposure, product visuals, online recommendations, and consumer-generated information. Snack product attractiveness is closely related to convenience, taste, and the integration of snacking habits into consumers' daily activities (Trisnalia & Farida, 2024).

In a competitive food market, repurchase intention is an important indicator of consumer retention and business sustainability because it reflects consumers' willingness to buy the same product again after prior experience with a brand. In the context of food and agricultural products, brand trust are showed positively influences purchase intention and purchase behavior, while purchase intention also plays an important role in translating consumer evaluation into actual buying behavior (Liu & Wang, 2023). This indicates that intention-based responses are essential for understanding whether consumers will continue purchasing a product. Identifying the factors that encourage consumers to repurchase is particularly important for local food brands that depend on repeated consumption, consumer trust, perceived product quality, and positive word-of-mouth.

Bika Ambon Ci Mehong is one of the local food products that has gained public attention through social media exposure. Its popularity has been supported by attractive product visuals, a distinctive brand name, digital promotional activities, and the role of food-related content creators in introducing the product to wider audiences. However, viral popularity in the food industry also creates reputational vulnerability. In the case of Bika Ambon Ci Mehong, public concern intensified after a viral TikTok review highlighted an alleged hygiene issue in the product, followed by online criticism of the brand's clarification (Riani, 2025). When food safety concerns, hygiene-related issues, or negative consumer narratives circulate online, consumers may quickly reassess their perception of the brand.

The issue of repurchase intention becomes more complex after viral food safety-related concerns emerge. Although such concerns may be expected to reduce consumers' willingness to repurchase, the preliminary survey among active Instagram followers of Bika Ambon Ci Mehong indicates a more nuanced response. Some consumers still expressed an intention to repurchase the product despite the circulation of hygiene-related concerns, suggesting that viral negative information does not necessarily lead to immediate consumer rejection. However, other respondents showed hesitation in continuing to buy the product when many alternatives were available and were not fully convinced that Bika Ambon Ci Mehong remained their most preferred brand.

Online customer reviews play an increasingly important role in shaping consumer decisions. Online customer reviews can be understood as a form of electronic word-of-mouth in online sales, through which prospective buyers obtain product-related information from analyses, evaluations, or comments

shared by consumers who have previously used and experienced the product (Indriyani, 2023). In digital food consumption, online reviews function as electronic word-of-mouth that provides information about taste, quality, service, packaging, hygiene, and consumer experience. Positive reviews may strengthen brand trust by reducing uncertainty about product safety and quality, while negative reviews may increase perceived risk and discourage consumers from repurchasing. Although prior research did not specifically focus on food products, its findings remain relevant because customer reviews were shown to strengthen consumer trust in online retail settings (Hanaysha et al., 2025).

Product quality is also a central consideration in consumers' repurchase evaluation, particularly in the food market. Consumers often rely on product quality perceptions when evaluating products and forming purchasing intentions, especially when uncertainty exists in the decision-making process (Kinawy, 2025). This view is consistent with a study that position product quality as an evaluative cue that reduces purchase risk and reinforces consumer confidence (Syahzad et al., 2026). In a restaurant context, cleanliness, safety, and product assurance as quality-related cues that shape consumer evaluation (Faradila & Silitonga, 2025), while others link product performance with trust formation in brand evaluation (Ilham et al., 2025). For food products, quality is not limited to taste, but also includes freshness, aroma, texture, durability, packaging, hygiene, and conformity with consumer expectations.

Brand trust is one of the key factors that may influence repurchase intention after viral food safety-related concerns. Prior studies indicate that consumers' purchase-oriented responses are closely connected to the extent to which they perceive a brand as reliable, credible, and capable of meeting their expectations. Brand trust has been placed as an important consideration in explaining consumers' purchase intention toward skincare products (Then & Johan, 2021). Although recent studies did not specifically examine food products, their findings remain relevant because brand trust was found to have a positive and significant effect on purchase intention in different product contexts, including fashion products and gaming mobiles (Kumar et al., 2026; Tafolli et al., 2025). These findings support the argument that trust may become a decisive factor when consumers consider whether to repurchase a product after being exposed to viral food safety-related concerns.

Though several previous findings remain inconsistent. Online customer review has been reported to strengthen buying interest through customer trust (Safira & Riva'i, 2024). In contrast, online customer review did not significantly affect purchase intention in another study (Chandra & Ekawati, 2024). Other research also reported a negative and non-significant effect on purchase decision (Arifin & Aminah, 2026). In addition, online customer review did not significantly affect customer trust among Gen Z e-commerce users, suggesting that online reviews do not always build consumer confidence in digital shopping contexts (Putri & Astuti, 2024). A similar inconsistency is observed for product quality, which significantly supported repurchase intention in the Yamaha context but did not directly affect repurchase intention in the Mustika Ratu study (Mutiah & Marlioni, 2024; Then & Johan, 2021). These mixed findings suggest

that online reviews, product quality, and brand trust may not always operate as direct predictors of purchase or repurchase intention. Therefore, this study examines repurchase intention after viral food safety concerns by analyzing the role of online customer review, product quality, and brand trust using the case study of Bika Ambon Ci Mehong.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R)

This study adopts the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework to explain consumers' repurchase intention toward Bika Ambon Ci Mehong after viral food safety-related concerns. The S-O-R framework explains consumer behavior through three sequential components: stimulus, organism, and response. The S-O-R framework is relevant to this study because viral food safety-related concerns create uncertainty in consumers' evaluation of food products. In this situation, consumers do not only rely on direct product experience. They also process external information and product-related signals before deciding whether to repurchase. Recent research on local food purchasing behavior shows that the S-O-R model can explain how external and contextual factors shape consumers' internal assessments and purchasing behavior in food-related contexts (Tortosa-Edo et al., 2025). This logic is suitable for the present study because consumers may reassess Bika Ambon Ci Mehong after receiving online information about food safety, hygiene, and product quality.

Repurchase Intention

Repurchase intention is the probability, based on past purchasing experiences, that customers will buy a good or service from the same brand again (Kotler & Keller, 2020). Beyond repeat buying, repurchase intention also reflects consumers' willingness to share positive information and recommend the product to others (Ayuwandani et al., 2025). This construct is strategically important because it supports customer retention, encourages habitual purchasing, and reduces the likelihood of switching to competitors (Lukito & Ikhsan, 2020). In this study, repurchase intention becomes more complex after viral food safety-related concerns because consumers may evaluate not only taste and popularity, but also product safety, perceived quality, brand trust, and online customer reviews before deciding whether to buy the product again.

Online Customer Review and Repurchase Intention

Online customer review refers to consumer-generated information and recommendations about a product presented online, typically based on consumers' personal experiences, evaluations, and opinions (Ayuwandani et al., 2025). Online customer review functions as post-purchase feedback that provides product-related information from previous consumers and helps prospective buyers evaluate product quality, credibility, and suitability before making purchase-related decisions (Sugiarti & Iskandar, 2021). In food products, online customer reviews may become more influential because consumers cannot fully observe hygiene, production processes, freshness, and storage conditions before consumption. Prior studies indicate that online customer review is relevant in

explaining purchase-related outcomes. Online customer review has been positioned as an important determinant of repurchase intention in online shopping and has also been documented as playing a role in shaping purchase decisions or buying interest in digital commerce (Ayuwandani et al., 2025; Dianty et al., 2026; Safira & Riva'i, 2024; Ulya & Suciningtyas, 2025).

H1: Online customer review has a significant effect on repurchase intention toward Bika Ambon Ci Mehong products.

Product Quality and Repurchase Intention

Product quality is a central consideration in consumers' repurchase evaluation, particularly in the food market. Consumers often rely on product quality perceptions when evaluating products and forming purchasing intentions, especially when uncertainty exists in the decision-making process (Kinawy, 2025). After viral food safety-related concerns, perceived product quality becomes more salient because consumers may become more sensitive to the physical and functional attributes of the product. When a food product is perceived as fresh, hygienic, well-packaged, and consistent, these quality cues may help consumers reassess whether the product remains reliable and worth purchasing again. This logic is consistent with prior studies that place product quality as an evaluative cue in purchase-related responses. Product quality has likewise been shown to be closely associated with consumer evaluation, trust formation, and purchase-oriented responses (Faradila & Silitonga, 2025; Ilham et al., 2025; Marto & Sukaatmadja, 2024; Syahzad et al., 2026).

H2: Product quality has a significant effect on repurchase intention toward Bika Ambon Ci Mehong products.

Online Customer Review and Brand Trust

Online customer review functions as a stimulus that may influence consumers' internal psychological state, particularly trust. When reviews are perceived as credible, consistent, and experience-based, consumers may develop stronger confidence in the brand. This relationship is particularly relevant after viral food safety-related concerns because consumers may search for external confirmation before deciding whether the brand remains reliable. Online customer review is viewed as a factor that contributes to brand trust in TikTok Shop (Ulya & Suciningtyas, 2025). In social-commerce settings, online customer reviews may also function as credibility cues that support consumer evaluation (Dianty et al., 2026). In addition, customer trust plays an important mechanism in linking online reviews with buying interest (Safira & Riva'i, 2024).

H3: Online customer review has a significant effect on brand trust toward Bika Ambon Ci Mehong products.

Product Quality and Brand Trust

In food consumption, quality cues such as freshness, hygiene, packaging, texture, durability, and taste consistency become important signals that help consumers determine whether a brand can still be trusted. Consumers often rely on product quality perceptions when evaluating products and forming purchasing intentions, particularly under conditions of uncertainty (Kinawy,

2025). In the food and agricultural product context, a study suggest that brand-related quality assurance can strengthen consumers' confidence and support purchase-related behavior (Liu & Wang, 2023). Perceived product quality may function as a trust-building cue after viral food safety-related concerns. Prior studies also provide consistent indications that product quality is closely connected to brand trust in consumer evaluation. Product quality has been identified as an important antecedent of brand trust formation across various product contexts (Diyanti & Giantari, 2021; Faradila & Silitonga, 2025; Ilham et al., 2025; Marto & Sukaatmadja, 2024).

H4: Product quality has a significant effect on brand trust toward Bika Ambon Ci Mehong products.

Brand Trust and Repurchase Intention

Consumers' perception of a brand's competence, dependability, honesty, and responsiveness to their needs is known as brand trust, and it is demonstrated by high-quality products, consistent communication, and ethical business operations (Monfort et al., 2025). In the food product context, this trust becomes particularly important because consumers need psychological assurance regarding product safety, hygiene, consistency, and reliability before deciding to repurchase. Prior studies indicate that consumers' purchase-oriented responses are closely connected to the extent to which they perceive a brand as reliable and credible. Brand trust has been positioned as a key psychological consideration in consumers' purchase-oriented evaluation, especially when they assess brand reliability and credibility (Then & Johan, 2021). This role becomes increasingly relevant in digital commerce settings, where consumers often rely on trust before forming purchase-related responses (Chandra & Ekawati, 2024). In food-related contexts, brand trust is also closely associated with purchase intention and purchase behavior, particularly for agricultural product brands (Liu & Wang, 2023). In this study, brand trust is expected to strengthen repurchase intention because consumers who continue to trust Bika Ambon Ci Mehong may perceive the product as safer, more reliable, and more worth buying again.

H5: Brand trust has a significant effect on repurchase intention toward Bika Ambon Ci Mehong products.

The Mediating Role of Brand Trust

Brand trust may mediate the effects of online customer review and product quality on repurchase intention because both factors do not only shape consumers' direct evaluation of the product, but also contribute to the formation of confidence before purchase-related responses occur. In the S-O-R framework, online customer review and product quality act as stimuli, brand trust represents the organism or internal psychological state, and repurchase intention reflects the behavioral response. Favorable online reviews may encourage repurchase intention by providing credible and experience-based information, while perceived product quality may serve as a trust-building cue that helps consumers determine whether the product remains reliable, safe, and worth buying again. This mediating logic is supported by prior studies showing that brand trust or customer trust mediates the relationship between online customer review and

purchase-related outcomes in digital commerce contexts (Dianty et al., 2026; Safira & Riva'i, 2024; Ulya & Suciningtyas, 2025). Similarly, previous studies indicate that brand trust can explain how product quality is translated into purchase-oriented responses, as shown in restaurant, smartphone, and repurchase intention contexts (Faradila & Silitonga, 2025; Ilham et al., 2025; Marto & Sukaatmadja, 2024). In the context of viral food safety-related concerns, consumers may rely on online reviews and perceived product quality to reassess the credibility of Bika Ambon Ci Mehong. Therefore, brand trust is expected to function as an internal psychological mechanism that connects online customer review and product quality with consumers' willingness to repurchase.

H6: Brand trust mediates the relationship between online customer review and repurchase intention toward Bika Ambon Ci Mehong products.

H7: Brand trust mediates the relationship between product quality and repurchase intention toward Bika Ambon Ci Mehong products.

The conceptual model of this study can be described as follows:

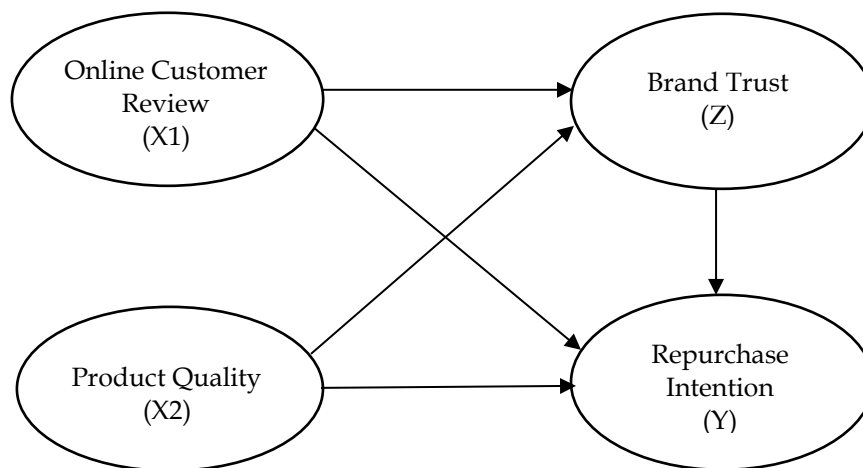


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

This study used a quantitative research approach to examine repurchase intention toward Bika Ambon Ci Mehong products after viral food safety-related concerns. A quantitative approach was considered appropriate because this study aimed to test the relationships among online customer review, product quality, brand trust, and repurchase intention using statistical analysis.

The population of this study consisted of Instagram followers of Bika Ambon Ci Mehong. The sample was selected using purposive sampling, which is a non-probability sampling technique. This technique was used because the study required respondents who met specific criteria related to the research context. The respondents had to be Instagram followers of Bika Ambon Ci Mehong, have knowledge of the product, and have been exposed to online information, reviews, or discussions related to the product after the viral food safety-related concerns.

The sample size was determined using an indicator-based approach. The research instrument consisted of 16 indicators. The minimum sample size was calculated by multiplying the number of indicators by seven, resulting in 112

respondents. This number was considered sufficient because it follows the common recommendation for SEM-PLS analysis, which requires a minimum sample size of five to ten times the number of indicators. The number of respondents also aligns with the general guideline that an appropriate sample size for research ranges from 30 to 500 respondents (Bougie & Sekaran, 2020). Therefore, 112 respondents were considered adequate for quantitative analysis using SEM-PLS.

Primary data were collected through an online questionnaire developed using Google Forms. The questionnaire was distributed to respondents who met the research criteria over a two-month period. The questionnaire consisted of two main sections. The first section contained screening and demographic questions, such as respondents' knowledge of Bika Ambon Ci Mehong, purchase experience, gender, age, and other relevant characteristics. The second section measured the research variables, namely online customer review, product quality, brand trust, and repurchase intention.

Online customer review was measured using four perceived review-related indicators, namely source credibility, argument quality, review valence, and perceived usefulness (Ayuwandani et al., 2025). Product quality was measured using four adapted indicators, namely freshness or durability, distinctive sensory quality, conformity with product information, and appearance (Faradila & Silitonga, 2025). Brand trust was measured using four indicators, namely trust, reliability, honesty, and safety (Swastika & Hapsari, 2023). Repurchase intention was measured using four indicators, namely transactional interest, referential interest, preferential interest, and exploratory interest (Mada & Bintari, 2024). Each construct consisted of four measurement items, resulting in a total of 16 indicators. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

The data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling based on Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). SEM-PLS was used because it is suitable for examining relationships among latent variables and for testing predictive models with relatively small to medium sample sizes. The analysis was conducted in two stages. The first stage evaluated the measurement model to assess the validity and reliability of the constructs. This assessment included indicator loading, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, average variance extracted, and discriminant validity. The second stage evaluated the structural model to test the proposed hypotheses. This assessment included path coefficients, t-statistics, p-values, and the coefficient of determination. The hypothesis testing was conducted using the bootstrapping procedure to examine the significance of the relationships among the variables.

RESULT

Measurement Model Evaluation

Convergent validity, reliability, and discriminant validity criteria were first used to evaluate the measurement model. Every concept satisfied the criteria for convergent validity and reliability in the initial estimation. However, there may be a discriminant validity problem between the two constructs because the

HTMT value between brand trust and repurchase intention was higher than the suggested threshold (Table 1).

Table 1. Initial HTMT Ratio

Construct Relationship	HTMT Value	Decision
Online Customer Review (X1) - Repurchase Intention (Y)	0.794	Acceptable
Product Quality (X2) - Repurchase Intention (Y)	0.822	Acceptable
Brand Trust (Z) - Repurchase Intention (Y)	0.954	Not acceptable
Online Customer Review (X1) - Product Quality (X2)	0.557	Acceptable
Brand Trust (Z) - Product Quality (X2)	0.865	Acceptable
Brand Trust (Z) - Online Customer Review (X1)	0.703	Acceptable

As a result, a measurement model refinement was carried out by analyzing the indicators' conceptual meaning and cross-loading values. Because repurchase intention indicator Y1 had a significant degree of overlap with brand trust and was thought to lessen the empirical distinctiveness between the two categories, it was eliminated. The resulting measurement model was then utilized for additional analysis once the model was re-estimated.

Table 2. HTMT Ratio

Construct Relationship	HTMT Value	Decision
Online Customer Review (X1) - Repurchase Intention (Y)	0.776	Acceptable
Product Quality (X2) - Repurchase Intention (Y)	0.883	Acceptable
Brand Trust (Z) - Repurchase Intention (Y)	0.830	Acceptable
Online Customer Review (X1) - Product Quality (X2)	0.557	Acceptable
Brand Trust (Z) - Product Quality (X2)	0.865	Acceptable
Brand Trust (Z) - Online Customer Review (X1)	0.703	Acceptable

As shown in Table 2, the HTMT results of the refined measurement model confirmed discriminant validity, as all construct relationships were below the recommended threshold of 0.90. The HTMT value between brand trust and repurchase intention decreased to 0.830 after the removal of indicator Y1, indicating that the discriminant validity concern identified in the initial model had been resolved. Although the HTMT values between product quality and

brand trust (0.865) and between product quality and repurchase intention (0.883) were relatively close to the threshold, these values remain acceptable. Therefore, the final measurement model satisfies the HTMT criterion for discriminant validity.

Table 3. Convergent Validity

Construct	Indicator	Outer Loading	AVE	Decision
Online Customer Review (X1)	X1.1	0.897	0.763	Valid
	X1.2	0.858		Valid
	X1.3	0.882		Valid
	X1.4	0.856		Valid
Product Quality (X2)	X2.1	0.881	0.691	Valid
	X2.2	0.877		Valid
	X2.3	0.729		Valid
	X2.4	0.828		Valid
Brand Trust (Z)	Z1	0.843	0.643	Valid
	Z2	0.801		Valid
	Z3	0.840		Valid
Repurchase Intention (Y)	Z4	0.717	0.651	Valid
	Y2	0.845		Valid
	Y3	0.840		Valid
	Y4	0.730		Valid

Each indicator represented its intended construct more strongly than other constructs, as indicated by Table 3, where the outer loading values of the maintained indicators were higher than their cross-loadings on other constructs. Convergent validity was confirmed by the AVE values above the suggested cutoff of 0.50. Additionally, the Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values were greater than 0.70, showing adequate internal consistency (Table 4).

Table 4. Reliability Test

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Decision
Online Customer Review (X1)	0.896	0.928	Reliable
Product Quality (X2)	0.851	0.899	Reliable
Brand Trust (Z)	0.814	0.878	Reliable
Repurchase Intention (Y)	0.732	0.848	Reliable

Structural Model Evaluation

The structural model was assessed to look at collinearity, explanatory power, effect size, and the significance of the proposed associations once the measurement model satisfied the validity and reliability standards. The inner VIF values were used to evaluate collinearity. According to the findings, all VIF values fell below the suggested cutoff of 5.00, ranging from 1.341 to 2.598. This suggests that the structural model did not take multicollinearity into account.

Table 5. Collinearity Test

Construct Relationship	VIF
Brand Trust (Z) -> Repurchase Intention (Y)	2.598
Online Customer Review (X1) -> Brand Trust (Z)	1.341
Online Customer Review (X1) -> Repurchase Intention (Y)	1.585
Product Quality (X2) -> Brand Trust (Z)	1.341
Product Quality (X2) -> Repurchase Intention (Y)	2.228

The coefficient of determination shows that online customer review and product quality explained 61.5% of the variance in brand trust ($R^2 = 0.615$). Meanwhile, online customer review, product quality, and brand trust explained 60.0% of the variance in repurchase intention ($R^2 = 0.600$). These findings show that the model's ability to explain brand trust and repurchase intention is moderate.

Table 6. Coefficient of Determination

Endogenous Construct	R-square	Interpretation
Brand Trust (Z)	0.615	Moderate
Repurchase Intention (Y)	0.600	Moderate

The f-square results further show that product quality had a large effect on brand trust ($f^2 = 0.661$), indicating that product quality is the strongest predictor of brand trust in this model. Online customer review had a medium effect on brand trust ($f^2 = 0.181$) and repurchase intention ($f^2 = 0.161$). Meanwhile, product quality ($f^2 = 0.100$) and brand trust ($f^2 = 0.077$) had small effects on repurchase intention. These findings suggest that product quality plays a more dominant role in building brand trust, while online customer review contributes meaningfully to both trust formation and repurchase intention.

Table 7. f-square

Construct Relationship	f-square
Brand Trust (Z) -> Repurchase Intention (Y)	0.077
Online Customer Review (X1) -> Brand Trust (Z)	0.181
Online Customer Review (X1) -> Repurchase Intention (Y)	0.161
Product Quality (X2) -> Brand Trust (Z)	0.661
Product Quality (X2) -> Repurchase Intention (Y)	0.100

Hypothesis Testing

Online customer reviews had a favorable and significant impact on repurchase intention ($\beta = 0.319$, $t = 3.811$, $p < 0.001$), according to Table 8's direct effect data. This suggests that positive customer reviews can increase customers' propensity to buy Bika Ambon Ci Mehong products again. Additionally, repurchase intention is positively and significantly impacted by product quality ($\beta = 0.299$, $t = 2.991$, $p = 0.003$), indicating that consumers are more inclined to make another purchase when they believe the product is dependable, consistent, and of good quality.

Additionally, the results demonstrate that brand trust is positively and significantly impacted by online customer reviews ($\beta = 0.306$, $t = 4.893$, $p < 0.001$). Customers' faith in the brand can therefore be strengthened via reliable and experience-based customer feedback. Product quality had the greatest direct impact on brand trust ($\beta = 0.584$, $t = 9.622$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that consumer trust is significantly influenced by perceived product quality. Repurchase intention is positively and significantly impacted by brand trust ($\beta = 0.283$, $t = 2.503$, $p = 0.012$), suggesting that consumers who trust the brand are more inclined to make another buy.

Table 8. Direct Effect

Hypothesis	Relationship	Coefficient	T-statistic	P-value	Decision
H1	Online Customer Review → Repurchase Intention	0.319	3.811	0.000	Supported
H2	Product Quality → Repurchase Intention	0.299	2.991	0.003	Supported
H3	Online Customer Review → Brand Trust	0.306	4.893	0.000	Supported
H4	Product Quality → Brand Trust	0.584	9.622	0.000	Supported
H5	Brand Trust → Repurchase Intention	0.283	2.503	0.012	Supported

Table 9 demonstrates that the association between online customer reviews and repurchase intention is considerably mediated by brand trust ($\beta = 0.087$, $t = 2.123$, $p = 0.034$). The mediation effect might be categorized as partial mediation since the direct impact of online customer reviews on repurchase intention is still substantial. According to this research, consumers' trust in the brand is strengthened by online customer reviews, which both directly and indirectly increase repurchase intention. Additionally, the association between product quality and repurchase intention is significantly mediated by brand trust ($\beta = 0.165$, $t = 2.384$, $p = 0.017$). This data suggests partial mediation because the direct impact of product quality on repurchase intention is also considerable. Put another way, high-quality products boost consumers' desire to make additional purchases both directly and indirectly by enhancing their faith in the brand.

Table 9. Indirect Effect

Hypothesis	Relationship	Coefficient	T-statistic	P-value	Decision
H6	Online Customer Review → Brand Trust → Repurchase Intention	0.087	2.123	0.034	Supported

H7	Product Quality → Brand Trust → Repurchase Intention	0.165	2.384	0.017	Supported
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DISCUSSION

The results of this study show that, following widespread worries about food safety, repurchase intention toward Bika Ambon Ci Mehong products is significantly influenced by online customer reviews, product quality, and brand trust. All of the direct and indirect hypotheses that were put forth were validated, indicating that consumers' propensity to make additional purchases is influenced by both external information and product-related assessments, as well as the degree to which these elements bolster brand confidence. This finding is especially pertinent to the food industry, because consumers frequently reevaluate safety, cleanliness, and dependability in response to unfavorable internet narratives. Repurchase intention following a reputational issue can therefore be viewed as both a behavioral reaction and a step in the process of reestablishing confidence.

Customer-generated information is crucial in lowering uncertainty, as seen by the favorable impact of online customer reviews on repurchase intention and brand trust. Online customer reviews of food goods are understood as social indicators that assist consumers in determining if the product is still safe, dependable, and worthwhile to repurchase in addition to being judgments about flavor or service (Ayuwandani et al., 2025). By offering proof of actual user experiences, seller legitimacy, and product conformance, online customer reviews enhance consumer trust (Dianty et al., 2026).

The impact of online customer reviews on brand trust and repurchase intention suggests that consumer-generated information is essential for reducing uncertainty. In food products, online evaluations are not only interpreted as opinions about taste or service, but also as social cues that assist consumers in determining whether the product is safe, reliable, and worth purchasing again (Ayuwandani et al., 2025). Online customer reviews enhance consumer trust by providing confirmation of real user experiences, seller legitimacy, and product compliance (Ulya & Suciningtyas, 2025).

Perceived quality is still a major factor in food-related repurchase decisions, as evidenced by the beneficial impact of product quality on repurchase intention and brand trust. Product quality has the most impact on brand trust out of all direct ties, suggesting that consumers' faith in Bika Ambon Ci Mehong can be restored primarily through perceived product quality. Given that customers are prone to reevaluate a brand based on tangible product features including freshness, sanitation, packaging, consistency, and perceived safety, this conclusion is especially significant in the context of viral food safety concerns. Repurchase intention is most strongly impacted by online customer reviews, although brand trust and product quality also have a substantial and comparable impact. This implies that rather than being influenced by a single dominant element, repurchase intention is influenced by both internal brand appraisal and exterior social information (Ilham et al., 2025; Marto & Sukaatmadja, 2024).

Repurchase intention was likewise found to be positively and significantly impacted by brand trust. This finding suggests that customers are more likely to repurchase Bika Ambon Ci Mehong if they believe the company is trustworthy, honest, and able to maintain product quality. Due to the fact that customers are unable to directly monitor all aspects of food production, storage, and hygiene prior to consumption, trust becomes particularly critical in a post-issue scenario (Chandra & Ekawati, 2024; Then & Johan, 2021).

The results of the mediation also indicate that brand trust partially mediates the relationship between repurchase intention and online consumer reviews. This implies that repurchase intention is influenced by online customer reviews in both direct and indirect ways, as a result of brand trust. To put it another way, positive reviews can prompt customers to think about making another purchase right away, but they have a greater impact when they first boost brand confidence (Ulya & Suciningtyas, 2025). Brand trust also partially mediates the relationship between product quality and repurchase intention. This indicates that product quality does not only operate as a direct driver of repurchase intention, but also as a trust-building cue. When consumers perceive the product as fresh, consistent, well-packaged, and safe, they are more likely to trust the brand, and this trust subsequently strengthens their intention to repurchase. (Ilham et al., 2025; Marto & Sukaatmadja, 2024). Thus, product quality becomes especially meaningful in food products because it is closely associated with safety, reliability, and consumer confidence.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusions

This study examined the effects of online customer review and product quality on repurchase intention toward Bika Ambon Ci Mehong products after viral food safety-related concerns, with brand trust as a mediating variable. The results show that online customer review and product quality have positive and significant effects on repurchase intention. This indicates that consumers' willingness to repurchase is shaped by both customer-generated information and their perception of the product's quality. The findings also reveal that online customer review and product quality significantly enhance brand trust, while brand trust positively influences repurchase intention.

Furthermore, brand trust was found to partially mediate the relationships between online customer review and repurchase intention, as well as between product quality and repurchase intention. These results suggest that online reviews and product quality do not only directly encourage repurchase intention, but also work indirectly by strengthening consumers' trust in the brand. In the context of food products after viral food safety-related concerns, this finding is particularly important because consumers tend to reassess product safety, hygiene, reliability, and brand credibility before deciding to buy again. Therefore, repurchase intention in this context can be understood not only as a behavioral response, but also as the outcome of a trust-rebuilding process.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, Bika Ambon Ci Mehong should prioritize product quality as the main strategy to rebuild and maintain consumer trust after viral food safety-related concerns. Since product quality has the strongest effect on brand trust, the brand needs to ensure consistency in taste, freshness, hygiene, packaging, durability, and product safety. These quality attributes should also be communicated transparently through social media, product information, and visual evidence of hygiene and quality control practices. In this context, quality improvement should not only be treated as an internal operational issue, but also as a trust-recovery strategy that helps consumers perceive the brand as safe, reliable, and worth repurchasing.

Given its direct and indirect influence on repurchase intention through brand trust, online customer review should be strategically managed as a key element of post-issue brand recovery. Positive reviews should be encouraged by maintaining service quality and inviting consumers to share authentic post-purchase experiences, while negative reviews or complaints should be addressed quickly, politely, and transparently. The brand should use social media not only for promotion, but also for reputation management by responding to consumer concerns, clarifying food safety issues, and strengthening credible communication. Future studies are recommended to include other variables such as perceived risk, customer satisfaction, crisis response, or negative e-WOM, and to examine consumers from different platforms or offline purchase contexts.

SUGGESTION

There are a number of limitations to this study. To begin with, the research exclusively examined Bika Ambon Ci Mehong products; consequently, the results may not be entirely applicable to other local food brands or distinct food categories. Second, the responses might not accurately reflect offline customers or purchases from other channels because they were restricted to consumers or followers who were introduced to the company through digital media, especially Instagram. Third, as a result of the cross-sectional design employed in this study, consumer perceptions were assessed at a single point in time following viral food safety-related concerns. Consequently, changes in trust and repurchase intention over time were not able to be monitored. Fourth, other pertinent characteristics including perceived risk, negative e-WOM, and food safety awareness were left out of the model, which only looked at online customer reviews, product quality, and brand trust. In order to provide a more thorough explanation of repurchase intention following food safety-related difficulties, future research may overcome these constraints by employing larger samples, comparing various food brands, and adding more variables.

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