



# The influence of perceived deceptive advertising on consumer behaviour in the online fashion environment: A stimulus-organism-response perspective

**Authors:**

Mia Bothma<sup>1</sup>   
Benecia van Staden<sup>1</sup> 

**Affiliations:**

<sup>1</sup>WorkWell Research Unit,  
Faculty of Economic and  
Management Sciences,  
North-West University,  
Potchefstroom, South Africa

**Corresponding author:**

Mia Bothma,  
mia.bothma@nwu.ac.za

**Dates:**

Received: 08 July 2025  
Accepted: 27 Oct. 2025  
Published: 25 Nov. 2025

**How to cite this article:**

Bothma, M. & Van Staden, B.,  
2025, 'The influence of  
perceived deceptive  
advertising on consumer  
behaviour in the online  
fashion environment: A  
stimulus-organism-response  
perspective', *South African  
Journal of Economic and  
Management Sciences*  
28(1), a6398.  
<https://doi.org/10.4102/sajems.v28i1.6398>

**Copyright:**

© 2025. The Authors.  
Licensee: AOSIS.  
This work is licensed under  
the Creative Commons  
Attribution 4.0 International  
(CC BY 4.0) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

**Read online:**

Scan this QR  
code with your  
smart phone or  
mobile device  
to read online.

**Background:** The rise of online fashion retailing has intensified competition and encouraged many brands to adjust their marketing efforts. Although deceptive advertising may deliver short-term results, it can damage consumer trust and satisfaction, threatening long-term customer relationships. The stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) theory provides a framework to investigate how deceptive advertising, an external stimulus, affects internal consumer responses and behaviour.

**Aim:** This study investigates how perceived deceptive advertising influences customer satisfaction, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) and repurchase intentions in the online fashion industry.

**Setting:** The research was conducted in the online fashion retail sector, using data from 500 online shoppers who had experienced deceptive advertising.

**Method:** A descriptive, quantitative approach was used, employing structured surveys. Structural equation modelling and mediation analysis were conducted to investigate the relationships between the constructs.

**Results:** Findings show that perceived advertising deception significantly reduces customer satisfaction. Lower satisfaction, in turn, leads to less positive eWOM and lower repurchase intentions. Customer satisfaction also plays a mediating role between deceptive advertising and both eWOM and repurchase behaviour.

**Conclusion:** The study tested the deception–satisfaction–behavioural outcome in the South African online fashion market, extending the generalisability to emerging markets. The study emphasises the role of ethical advertising in promoting satisfaction and trust that drive positive eWOM, repurchase intentions and sustainable business growth.

**Contribution:** Ethical advertising should be prioritised to enhance customer satisfaction and build trust-based relationships. By understanding the mediating role of customer satisfaction, retailers can develop more effective marketing strategies that drive positive eWOM and increase repurchase intentions.

**Keywords:** fashion industry; online marketing; perceived advertising deception; online customer satisfaction; electronic word-of-mouth; online repurchase intentions.

## Introduction

Technology advances, accelerated by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, have transformed how South African consumers shop for fashion, making social media not just a marketplace but also a platform to drive online shopping and customer engagement (Gourkar 2023). Social media, a type of online advertising, creates the opportunity for low-cost, simple and rapid communication between individuals that can increase sales, customer intimacy, trust and purchase intentions for organisations (Zollo et al. 2020). In the fashion industry, organisations are continuously exploring innovative persuasive communication strategies to differentiate their products and services and capture consumer attention, which explains why many industries have embraced social media as a key marketing tool (Appel et al. 2020).

While social media offers opportunities for engagement and brand differentiation, it also opens the door to new forms of advertising deception, where an organisation or marketer attempts to create a false impression using marketing communication (Held & Germelmann 2018). Several high-profile cases of deceptive advertising have recently emerged in the global fashion industry, indicating the widespread nature of the problem. For example, in 2023, the United Kingdom's Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) ruled that the Manchester-based retailer Pretty Little Thing misled customers during a Black Friday campaign by implying a uniform 40% discount that did not apply to all products (Burnell 2024). Similarly, Ted Baker faced criticism for advertising discounts of up to 70%, while many items were discounted less (Ramapele 2023). On a broader scale, the Italian Competition Authority launched an investigation into Infinite Style Services over alleged misleading claims in their Shein-related campaigns (AGCM 2024). In South Africa, deceptive advertising in the fashion sector has also drawn regulatory attention. The Advertising Regulatory Board investigated Truworths for violating advertising codes by promising fashion vouchers to entice customers to sign up for credit cards, raising concerns about misleading promotional practices (Crouth 2023). More recently, African Bank was fined R700 000.00 by the Financial Sector Conduct Authority (FSCA) for a 2023 social media campaign that misleadingly presented a credit product as an investment, using the phrase 'It's not a *skoloto chomi!* Ke investment', which misrepresented the nature and risks of the loan product (BusinessTech 2025). These cases underscore the local relevance of deceptive advertising and growing concern in South Africa about these practices that can inflict on consumer trust and brand reputation within the South African market (Gourkar 2023).

However, although deceptive advertising remains a significant global issue that demands attention, the consequences of perceived deception remain largely unexplored (Held & Germelmann 2018; Wilson, Darke & Sengupta 2022). While some studies have investigated perceived deception in industries such as weight loss products (Lim, Chock & Golan 2020), detergent powder (Virdi 2020) and hotel online reviews (Siddiqi, Sun & Akhtar 2020), little is known about its impact on South African consumers' behaviour in the fashion industry. This study addresses this gap by applying the stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) framework to examine how perceived advertising deception influences online customer satisfaction, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) and repurchase intentions among South African fashion consumers. The findings aim to inform both academic understanding and practical strategies for ethical digital marketing.

## Literature review

The following section provides a brief overview of the literature related to this study.

## Online advertising and social media

Online advertising uses the internet to communicate promotional messages to target consumers and provides a simple and efficient way for organisations to display their products and services (Paul et al. 2023). With the expansion of the internet, various online advertising options have emerged, including search portals, social media platforms, e-commerce sites, online games, mobile apps, online videos and banner advertisements, all of which help deliver marketing messages to potential consumers (Yang & Zhai 2022). Social media platforms are websites and networks created to offer a diverse range of services such as information, online friendships, communication between people and involvement in various media, such as videos and photographs (Salloum et al. 2017). Social media has significantly transformed the marketing landscape, reshaping how organisations interact with their customers, with various organisations integrating social media platforms as a key marketing tool (Appel et al. 2020; Li, Larimo and Leonidou 2021). Social media enhances advertising, customer service, product development, feedback and other operations that rely on information sharing and customer engagement. In addition, the wealth of social media data has improved organisations' ability to manage consumer relationships and make better commercial decisions (Li et al. 2021).

## The clothing industry and social media

In the digital era, the clothing industry has transformed faster than other industries because of customer fashion habits, which are continually evolving (Camargo, Pereira & Scarpin 2020). Clothing has now evolved beyond a necessity to a symbol of social status, shaping both individual identity and cultural expression (Gunawan 2022). The growing reliance on social media has transformed marketing in the fashion industry, where brands now prioritise visual content and consumer engagement to attract customers. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp offer platforms for consumers to engage with brands and stay informed about the latest fashion trends that reflect societal values (Li et al. 2021). These platforms are particularly significant for online clothing shoppers, who rely on them to track emerging trends and adjust their purchasing behaviour. As fashion is heavily influenced by social media, research emphasises the importance of digital engagement in shaping consumer buying habits, with Tarnanidis et al. (eds. 2023) highlighting how real-time interactions on social media platforms, particularly in the rapidly evolving fashion retail sector, significantly influence consumer buying decisions.

## Stimulus-organism-response theory

The S-O-R theory is based on the law of effect and is viewed as a significant paradigm for understanding how humans react to stimuli. The theory aims to explain how environmental stimuli (S) influence customer perceptions (O), which in turn stimulate emotions that cause consumer responses (Woodworth 1958). The S-O-R theory was developed to describe behavioural variances brought about by various

marketing stimuli and cognitive elements, and it indicates linear correlations between the elements, which are uncomplicated (Sultan, Wong & Azam 2021). Initially used in offline environments, the S-O-R model has been extended to online settings, such as e-commerce, where it helps explain how stimuli, like website cues or advertisements, influence online consumer behaviour (Kaur, Lal & Bedi 2017). This study applies the S-O-R theory by investigating perceived deceptive advertising as the stimulus that negatively influences consumers' internal evaluations, which are measured as online customer satisfaction (the organism), and this subsequently influences their behavioural responses, such as eWOM and repurchase intentions.

### Perceived advertising deception

Perceived advertising deception refers to the customer's perception that an organisation or marketers try to generate a false belief through a variety of marketing communications (Held & Germelmann 2018). False advertising can mislead consumers, leading to incorrect conclusions and reduced trust in marketing claims and includes a variety of actions such as false or misleading claims and manipulation of visuals to emphasise certain features or advantages (Petrescu et al. 2019). In addition, deceptive advertising serves a practical purpose as the means to an end, which is often motivated by the desire for recognition, respect and financial gain. Deceptive advertising furthermore involves the communicator's perception that the information provided is false and has a deliberate intent to deceive (Chaouachi & Rached 2019). This study defines perceived advertising deception as a customer's belief that the advertising they have been exposed to is attempting to mislead them about the product or service benefits, potentially harming their interests (Au & Wong 2019; Chaouachi & Rached 2019). The construct was measured through five items, which relate to respondents indicating that, on social media, organisations utilise misleading strategies to persuade customers to buy their products, that the social media advertisement is not completely upfront about its offerings and that the social media misrepresent product characteristics (Riquelme, Román & Iacobucci 2016; Riquelme & Román 2014).

### Online customer satisfaction

Initially, Oliver (1997) defined customer satisfaction as the consumer's assessment of a product's capacity to deliver a satisfying amount of fulfilment from consumption. As e-commerce continues to grow, customer satisfaction has expanded beyond traditional commerce and now extends to the online shopping environment. Online satisfaction, therefore, refers to a customer's experience with an online shopping platform (Rahmawaty et al. 2021). Satisfied customers are more likely to make repeat purchases and recommend products, whereas poor service and inaccurate product information can lead to dissatisfaction and lost commercial opportunities (Pandiangan et al. 2021). Online satisfaction has become an essential asset for organisations operating in the digital marketplace as maximising satisfaction through efficient platforms and accurate

information can enhance both immediate sales and long-term customer loyalty (Gshayyish 2023).

### Electronic word-of-mouth

The rise of the internet has transformed traditional WOM into eWOM, where consumers share their experiences and reviews online through social media, websites and forums (Aydoğan & Aktan 2019). Electronic word-of-mouth, as an evolving communication tool, significantly shapes consumer behaviour and offers a cost-effective alternative to traditional advertising, broader reach, faster communication and easier access to global reviews, which makes it a significant tool for shaping purchasing decisions (Ai et al. 2022).

Social media platforms play an important role in disseminating eWOM (Romadhoni et al. 2023). From an organisational perspective, eWOM is valuable for engaging with customers, gathering user-generated content and influencing purchasing intentions. It furthermore assists organisations to build customer relationships, trust and loyalty (Halim et al. 2022). Customers, in turn, rely on peer reviews and opinions shared within online networks, often trusting them more than the organisation's advertisements (Ahrens, Coyle & Strahilevitz 2013). Whether positive or negative, WOM is a powerful communication tool that can significantly impact purchasing decisions (Romadhoni et al. 2023).

This study defined eWOM as customers' willingness to share their experiences with other customers about products or services in an online environment. This includes activities like writing online reviews, posting product photos on forums and seeking product or service-related suggestions (Chang & Wang 2019). Adapted from validated studies, the items used to measure eWOM included items such as the customers' excitement to comment on social platforms or media about the online clothing retailer, that they have written positive comments about the online clothing retailer on social media and that they have posted positive reviews about the online clothing retailer on social media (Kala & Chaubey 2018).

### Online repurchase intentions

Repurchase intention, which has been extensively studied by marketing researchers, is often characterised as the desire to repeatedly buy a specific good or service over time (Won & Kim 2020). Online shopping environments differ from in-store shopping environments because front-line employees are replaced with websites and technologies, as well as numerous third parties, including delivery services and credit card clearing organisations, which are involved in every online purchase (Díaz, Gómez & Molina 2017). Online repurchase intention, therefore, refers to a consumer's tendency to frequently purchase a product or brand from the same online retailer. In marketing literature, it is also known as a repeat buy, a continuing intention and similar intentions (Pettinger, Jamil & Roja 2022).

In the highly competitive online market, understanding and promoting repurchase intention is vital for the sustainability

and profitability of online organisations (Zhu, Kowatthanakul & Satanasavapak 2019). These authors indicate that an online retailer's success is influenced by both the strategies implemented to keep customers and the inherent qualities of the goods and services that are advertised in the market. For this reason, marketers must understand the factors that influence consumer decision-making about online purchases and repurchase intent as retail organisational models become increasingly more reliant on online sales (Fazal-e-Hasan et al. 2019). For this reason, both satisfaction and perceived advertising deception are relevant to online repurchase intention and, therefore, are investigated in this study.

This study defines online repurchase intentions as the possibility of a buyer returning to an online store on their own or purchasing anything from a website again (Pandiangan et al. 2021). The items that were used to measure this construct refer to, for example, the customers' likelihood of using the clothing retailer in the future, their intent to repurchase clothing from the same online clothing retailer and the customer's intent to buy clothing products from the same online clothing retailer rather than any other online clothing retailer (Kala & Chaubey 2018; Trivedi & Yadav 2020).

### Conceptual model development

Customer and marketing studies about advertising deception have largely focused on how perceived deception affects consumer satisfaction, trust in advertisers and negative reactions (Lim et al. 2020; Riquelme et al. 2016). Most current studies were conducted in the e-commerce and hospitality industry, which established that perceived advertising deception has a negative influence on online customer satisfaction. Deceptive hotel online reviews cause emotional fury and disappointment, which in turn lead to dissatisfaction and uncomfortable customers (Akhtar et al. 2019). Customers, therefore, feel disappointed and dissatisfied when they learn that organisations have misled them, unfairly exploited them or provided them with inaccurate information about products (Joseph & Nimako 2015). Riquelme et al. (2016) established that customers who shop online will experience perceived deception to a greater extent because the online environment makes it easier for dishonest retailers to alter product information than in physical stores. This is also the case because the internet's generally unreliable and emotionless nature makes it harder for customers to identify deception.

Customer satisfaction is therefore negatively impacted by dishonest or manipulative selling methods (Riquelme & Román 2014).

This study argues that misleading advertisements might lead to negative online customer satisfaction as customers may feel dissatisfied when social media advertisements are not completely upfront about a clothing item's features and benefits. This negative relationship between perceived advertising deception and online customer satisfaction can become evident when social media posts exaggerate

the product's attributes, which might result in customers feeling misled. Therefore, when online clothing shoppers perceive the advertisements to be dishonest, they are likely to experience dissatisfaction with the products they purchase.

Hence, this study hypothesises that:

- H1:** Perceived advertising deception has a negative and significant influence on online customer satisfaction among online clothing customers.

Electronic word-of-mouth provides prospective customers with explicit information and also the possibility of interactivity (Tsao & Hsieh 2012). Customer satisfaction has been established as a crucial antecedent of behavioural intentions, particularly WOM, in the travel and tourism industry (Prayag et al. 2017) and also in the e-retailer environment (Jain, Dixit & Shukla 2023). These authors concluded that when customers are satisfied with an e-retailer, they are more prone to provide positive e-WOM to new and current customers of the e-retailer.

It is therefore possible to argue that when customers are satisfied with the clothing item that they have purchased, they are likely to engage in positive eWOM about the online clothing retailer. Hence, the study hypothesises that:

- H2:** Online customer satisfaction positively and significantly influences eWOM among online clothing customers in South Africa.

If a customer is satisfied with a product, they are probably going to purchase the product again and will also share the positive experience with others (Oktaviani, Astuti & Firdiansjah 2019). Consumer satisfaction helps organisations determine what customers want, enabling them to satisfy their needs and encouraging customers to make additional purchases that benefit organisations (Agarwal, Wang & Yang 2021).

In a retail and e-commerce environment, Jia, Cegielski and Zhang (2014) established that customer satisfaction positively influences the intention of customers to make additional purchases. Because of the influence of online satisfaction, a pleased consumer is more likely to establish a long-lasting relationship with the online organisation, which often encourages customers to make additional purchases from the same online store (Trivedi & Yadav 2020).

This study, therefore, argues that in the online clothing retail environment, online customer satisfaction may have a positive and significant impact on their online repurchase intentions. It is argued that when customers feel that they are satisfied with the online clothing retailers' online purchasing procedure, they may purchase from the same online retailer again.

Hence, the study hypothesises that:

- H3:** Online customer satisfaction positively and significantly influences online repurchase intention among online clothing customers in South Africa.

A mediator was first described by Baron and Kenny (1986) as the generating process through which the main independent variable can affect the relevant dependent variable. A variable that serves as a bridge between both dependent and independent variables is referred to as a mediator (Hofmann, Curtiss & Hayes 2020). Various studies have established that customer satisfaction can act as a mediator in different relationships. For example, in the transport service environment, Emaluta and Soewarno (2019) established that customer satisfaction acts as a mediator between customer relationship management and customer loyalty. Also, the impact of customer satisfaction on the relationship between service quality, perceived value and brand loyalty among airline customers in Bali was examined by Devi and Yasa (2021). The results of the study demonstrate that customer satisfaction can act as a mediator between service quality and brand loyalty and between brand loyalty and perceived value.

It is likely that online customer satisfaction may act as a mediating factor pertaining to the negative relationship between perceived advertising deception and eWOM and the negative relationship between perceived advertising deception and online repurchase intentions in an online clothing environment. When perceived advertising deception increases, online customer satisfaction will decrease, which will subsequently cause a decrease in eWOM and online repurchase intention. Online customer satisfaction might therefore be a significant negative mediator in the relationships between perceived advertising deception and both eWOM and online repurchase intentions.

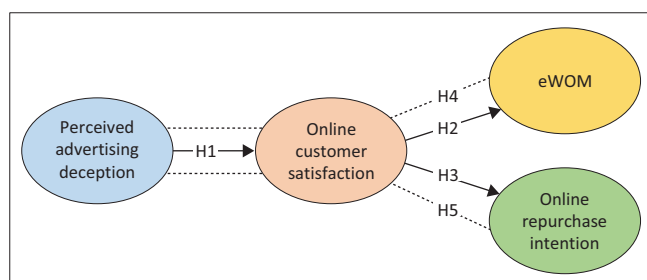
Hence, it is hypothesised that:

- H4:** Perceived advertising deception has a significant negative indirect effect on eWOM, as mediated by online customer satisfaction among online clothing customers in South Africa.
- H5:** Perceived advertising deception has a significant negative indirect effect on online repurchase intentions, as mediated by online customer satisfaction among online clothing customers in South Africa.

The conceptual model for this study is presented in Figure 1.

## Methods

This study employed both the positivism and interpretivism research paradigms, which are commonly used paradigms in social science research (Brown & Dueñas 2020). The study



eWOM, electronic word-of-mouth.

**FIGURE 1:** Conceptual model of the study.

combines positivism for empirical measurement using reliable instruments with interpretivism to capture respondents' diverse, socially shaped perceptions of online clothing retailers and advertisements. In addition, the study used a descriptive research design to explain the features of the individual, circumstance or group, in this case, the impact of perceived advertising deception on online customer satisfaction and eWOM. The target population for this study was male and female participants older than 18 who have purchased clothing from an online retailer, have seen a perceived deceptive advertisement and reside in the Gauteng province of South Africa. The Gauteng province is the province with the largest population in South Africa, with 24.3% of the South African population residing in this province (Statistics SA [StatsSA] 2025). In addition, the Gauteng province contributes 34.3% of South Africa's GDP and is therefore viewed as the economic and commercial hub of South Africa (StatsSA 2025).

## Sample and data collection

Quantitative primary data are collected through computer-administered questionnaires. An internationally accredited panel research company (IPSOS) used convenience and quota sampling to collect 500 usable questionnaires. The convenience sampling method was deemed the most suitable for this study because of the lack of a sample frame and the lack of a mechanism to determine how many components exist in a population (Rinjit 2011:208). Quota sampling was employed to include only respondents from the Gauteng province. The questionnaire was developed on Google Forms, and IPSOS distributed the questionnaire to their panel. The demographic profile of the respondents was collected by IPSOS rather than in the measurement instrument to reduce response burden. All respondents were over the age of 18, resided in the Gauteng province of South Africa, purchased clothing from an online retailer and saw a perceived deceptive advertisement. Table 1 presents the demographic profile of respondents.

As indicated in Table 1, the sample profile included both male and female respondents. In total, 31.80% of the respondents are male and 68.20% were female. All participants were over the age of 18 years, and the majority of the respondents were between the ages of 18 years and 30 years (52%). Table 1 further shows that more than half (58%) of the respondents were full-time employed, and another 10.20% were part-time employed. In addition, the majority of the participants have a university degree (34.60%) or have completed high school (28.40%).

## Measurement instrument and operationalisation of constructs

The measurement instrument used consisted of three sections and included a cover letter, screen questions and the construct measurement section. The cover letter of the study indicated to the participants the purpose of the study, duration of the questionnaire, ethical considerations such as

confidentiality and anonymity and provided the contact information of the researchers. Section A includes screening questions to ensure that the participants are part of the target population. The screening questions asked: (1) if the respondents were older than 18 years of age, (2) have recently made an online purchase, (3) reacted to a clothing advertisement on Facebook (purchase) and then, after receiving the clothing item, realised that the advertisement was deceiving, and (4) reside in the Gauteng province of South Africa. The construct measurement section included the items that measured each construct in the conceptual model. For all constructs, participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each item by using a 6-point labelled Likert scale, which ranged from 1: strongly disagree to 6: strongly agree. The items used to measure constructs were adapted from previously reliable and validated items, as indicated in the literature review section, where the operationalisation of each construct was discussed.

## Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance to conduct this study was obtained from the Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee of the North-West-University on 30 August 2022 (No. NWU-01806-22-A4). Human participants were part of this study. The cover letter of the questionnaire indicated an informed consent section where participants indicated that they had read the above description of this research study. The participants had been informed that it was a low-risk study, and they are aware of the purpose of the study. They

**TABLE 1:** Demographic profile of respondents ( $N = 500$ ).

Demographic variables	<i>n</i>	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	159	31.80
Female	341	68.20
<b>Age (years)</b>		
18–24	114	22.80
25–30	146	29.20
31–35	99	19.80
36–40	63	12.60
41–45	40	8.00
46–50	24	4.80
51–55	14	2.80
<b>Employment status</b>		
Employed full-time	290	58.00
Employed part-time	51	10.20
Full-time parent, homemaker	6	1.20
Retired	1	0.20
Self-employed	51	10.20
Student	37	7.40
Unemployed, not looking for a job	3	0.60
Unemployed, looking for a job	61	12.20
<b>Level of education</b>		
Certificate, technical, secretarial qualification	39	7.80
High school completed	142	28.40
No formal school	1	0.20
Postgraduate degree	51	10.20
Primary school completed	4	0.80
Some high school	21	4.20
Technikon diploma	69	13.80
University degree	173	34.60

voluntarily agree to take part in this study, and by continuing and completing the questionnaire, they consent to the information being used in aggregate form. No personal data of the participants were collected; thus, the confidentiality of the data was ensured.

## Results

The following section provides the results obtained from the data analysis. Jamovi software was used to analyse the data.

### Reliability and validity

The reliability of measuring items was evaluated by calculating the Cronbach's alpha value for each construct. As indicated in Table 2, all Cronbach's alpha values were 0.70 (Cronbach 1951), which indicates that the measurement items were reliable.

To evaluate the validity of the measurement model, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted. The four constructs examined in this study, namely perceived advertising deception, online customer satisfaction, eWOM and online repurchase intentions, were included in the measuring model. An evaluation of the model fit, convergent and discriminant validity and the heterotrait–monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations was assessed to investigate the validity of the measurement instrument used.

Table 3 presents the factor loadings for each construct and level of significance ( $p$ -value).

As indicated, all standard factor loadings are close to 0.700, indicating a strong and positive relationship between the latent variables and their respective measurement statements (Hair, Howard & Nitzl 2020).

The factor loadings, composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) were examined to assess convergent validity. Table 4 presents the CR and AVE values of each construct, which were above the recommended cut-off values (Hair et al. 2020).

Discriminant validity was evaluated through the HTMT ratio values. The HTMT ratio values are indicated in Table 5.

As indicated in Table 5, all HTMT ratio values were below 0.900 and therefore discriminant validity was established (Ku et al. 2022).

Therefore, as per Table 3, Table 4 and Table 5, the measurement items proved to be reliable and valid.

**TABLE 2:** Cronbach's alpha values.

Construct	Cronbach's alpha values
Perceived advertising deception	0.86
Online customer satisfaction	0.92
eWOM	0.85
Online repurchase intentions	0.91

eWOM, electronic word-of-mouth.

## Common-method bias

To test for common-method bias, Harman's single-factor test was performed using an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) analysis. The first factor explained 46.3% of the variance, which is less than the threshold of 50% variance explained (Podsakoff et al. 2003). It can therefore be concluded that the dataset is free from common-method bias.

## Hypotheses testing

The fit statistics of the conceptual model indicated an acceptable model fit (Comparative Fit Index (CFI): 0.953; Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI): 0.944; Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA): 0.07). All fit indices were above the recommended cut-off values (Hair et al. 2020). Subsequent to determining the acceptable model fit of the conceptual model, the structural model was investigated. The structural model also proved to have acceptable model fit (CFI: 0.953; TLI: 0.945; RMSEA: 0.069).

**TABLE 3:** Standard factor loadings.

Latent variable	Measurement items	Std. loading	SE	p-value
Perceived advertising deception	On social media, organisations utilise misleading strategies to persuade customers to buy their items.	0.81	0.05	< 0.001
	The social media advertisement is not completely upfront about its offerings.	0.80	0.04	< 0.001
	Social media pages exaggerate the advantages and features of the organisation's products.	0.80	0.04	< 0.001
	Social media misrepresents product characteristics.	0.73	0.05	< 0.001
	The social media advertisement attempts to persuade you to buy products that you do not need.	0.62	0.05	< 0.001
Online customer satisfaction	I am satisfied with the online clothing retailers' online purchasing procedure.	0.75	0.05	< 0.001
	Overall, I am happy about online clothing retailers' terms.	0.83	0.04	< 0.001
	I am satisfied with my decision to purchase from the online clothing retailer.	0.88	0.04	< 0.001
	I think I did the right thing by buying from the online clothing retailer.	0.90	0.05	< 0.001
	My choice to purchase via social media was a wise one.	0.79	0.05	< 0.001
eWOM	I am excited to comment on social platforms or media about the online clothing retailer.	0.67	0.05	< 0.001
	I have written positive comments about the online clothing retailer on social media.	0.90	0.05	< 0.001
	I have posted positive reviews about the online clothing retailer on websites or social media.	0.89	0.05	< 0.001
Online repurchase intentions	I will use the online clothing retailer in the near future.	0.82	0.05	< 0.001
	I intend to repurchase from the same online clothing retailer	0.92	0.05	< 0.001
	My willingness to repurchase products from the same online clothing retailer is high.	0.92	0.05	< 0.001
	I would buy clothing products from the same online clothing retailer rather than any other online clothing retailer.	0.83	0.05	< 0.001
	I intend to purchase clothing products online in the future.	0.61	0.04	< 0.001

Std., standard; SE, standard error; eWOM, electronic word-of-mouth.

Using structural equation modelling (SEM), the formulated hypotheses were tested. Table 6 provides the hypotheses testing results for the direct relationships.

The results presented in Table 6 indicate that hypothesis H1 was supported as perceived advertising deception had a significant and negative effect on online customer satisfaction ( $\beta = -0.374$ ;  $SE = 0.045$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). Hypothesis H2 was also supported, as it was established that online customer satisfaction positively and significantly influences eWOM ( $\beta = 0.765$ ;  $SE = 0.057$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). Finally, hypothesis H3 was supported, as online customer satisfaction has a positive and significant influence on online repurchase intentions ( $\beta = 0.862$ ;  $SE = 0.062$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ).

Table 7 presents the results of the hypotheses testing for the indirect relationships.

As indicated in Table 7, both hypotheses (H4 and H5) were supported. In the first instance, perceived advertising deception showed an indirect effect on eWOM through online customer satisfaction ( $\beta = -0.286$ , standard error [SE] = 0.040,  $p < 0.001$ , 95% CI [-0.362, -0.207]), indicating partial mediation, as the direct path from perceived advertising deception to eWOM remained significant. Similarly, perceived advertising deception displayed an indirect effect on online repurchase intention through online customer satisfaction ( $\beta = -0.322$ ,  $SE = 0.043$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , 95% CI [-0.402, -0.235]), also indicating partial mediation, as the direct effect from perceived advertising deception to repurchase intention is significant.

**TABLE 4:** Convergent validity: Composite reliability and average variance extracted values.

Variable	CR	Ave
Perceived advertising deception	0.86	0.56
Online customer satisfaction	0.92	0.69
eWOM	0.85	0.70
Online repurchase intentions	0.91	0.72
Acceptable value (Hair et al. 2020)	> 0.70	> 0.50

Note: Please see full reference list of this article, Bothma, M. & Van Staden, B., 2025, 'The influence of perceived deceptive advertising on consumer behaviour in the online fashion environment: A stimulus-organism-response perspective', *South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences* 28(1), a6398. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajems.v28i1.6398>, for more information.

CR, composite reliability; eWOM, electronic word-of-mouth; AVE, average variance extracted.

**TABLE 5:** Heterotrait-monotrait values.

Variable	PercDec	OSAT	eWOM	ORerI
Perceived advertising deception (PercDec)	1.00	0.37	0.33	0.32
Online customer satisfaction (OSAT)	0.37	1.00	0.79	0.89
Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM)	0.33	0.79	1.00	0.84
Online repurchase intentions (ORerI)	0.32	0.89	0.84	1.00

**TABLE 6:** Hypotheses testing: Direct relationships.

Relationship	Std. $\beta$	SE	p-value	Results
H1 (-): Perceived advertising deception → Online customer satisfaction	-0.37	0.04	< 0.001	Supported
H2 (+): Online customer satisfaction → eWOM	0.76	0.06	< 0.001	Supported
H3 (+): Online customer satisfaction → Repurchase intentions	0.86	0.06	< 0.001	Supported

Std., standard; SE, standard error; eWOM, electronic word-of-mouth.

**TABLE 7:** Hypotheses testing for the indirect relationships.

Relationship	Std. $\beta$	SE	95% confidence levels		<i>p</i> -value	Results
			Lower	Upper		
H4 (-): Perceived advertising deception $\rightarrow$ Online customer satisfaction $\rightarrow$ eWOM	-0.29	0.04	-0.36	-0.207	< 0.001	Supported
H5 (-): Perceived advertising deception $\rightarrow$ Online customer satisfaction $\rightarrow$ Repurchase intentions	-0.33	0.04	-0.40	-0.235	< 0.001	Supported

Std., standard; SE, standard error; eWOM, electronic word-of-mouth.

## Conclusion

The study established that when online clothing customers perceive an advertisement to be deceptive, their level of satisfaction with the online clothing retailer will decrease. Perceived advertising deception, therefore, has a negative but significant impact on online clothing shoppers' level of satisfaction. In contrast with this negative relationship, online customer satisfaction positively and significantly influences eWOM and online repurchase intentions among online clothing customers in South Africa. Importantly, the study further established that online customer satisfaction is a significant negative mediator in the relationship between perceived advertising deception and both eWOM and online repurchase intention. This means that an increase in perceived advertising deception leads to a decrease in online customer satisfaction, which in turn reduces positive eWOM and may increase the likelihood of negative eWOM. Consequently, dissatisfied consumers are more likely to share unfavourable experiences online, ultimately reducing repurchase intentions.

## Theoretical implications

Consistent with the findings of Joseph and Nimako (2015) and Riquelme and Román (2014), this study confirmed that among South African online clothing customers, perceived advertising deception has a significant and negative influence on online customer satisfaction. In other words, when online clothing shoppers believe an advertisement on social media to be dishonest, it can lead to a lower level of satisfaction.

This study also confirmed the findings of Purba and Paramita (2021) and Setyaning and Nugroho (2020) within the South African clothing industry, which showed that online customer satisfaction has a significant and positive influence on eWOM. When online clothing shoppers are satisfied with the organisation and product, then they will also participate in eWOM behaviours. Furthermore, concurring with the findings of Agarwal et al. (2021) and Purba and Paramita (2021), this study confirmed that online customer satisfaction has a significant and positive influence on online repurchase intentions among South African online clothing customers. When online clothing shoppers are satisfied with the organisation and products, these customers are likely to repurchase from the same online clothing retailer. These findings relate to the very competitive environment of online clothing, where perceived advertising deception seems to

take place. In addition, the research provided novel results within the online clothing environment in South Africa.

The study supports the findings of Devi and Yasa (2021) and Emaluta and Soewaarno (2019) by establishing that in the online clothing environment in South Africa, online customer satisfaction acts as a mediator in the relationship between perceived advertising deception and eWOM and the relationship between perceived advertising deception and repurchase intention. Online customer satisfaction, therefore, explains how perceived advertising deception influences both eWOM and repurchase intentions. If a customer feels that an advertisement is deceptive, their level of satisfaction decreases, and this lower level of satisfaction reduces their likelihood of repurchasing clothing products. Also, when a customer experiences a deceptive advertisement, their level of satisfaction decreases, which results in a lower likelihood of producing positive eWOM.

## Managerial implications

Perceived advertising deception has negative influences on consumer behaviour and should be avoided.

Organisations should therefore be transparent in their advertising by clearly communicating the benefits of the products and also indicating any potential problems that might exist. It is important that organisations do not oversell the product and then underdeliver and should use advertisements to educate customers about the products and provide sound information that can assist customers to make informed decisions.

To increase repurchase intentions, online clothing organisations should satisfy customers by ensuring easy and efficient purchase processes and providing good customer service. As online customer satisfaction has a positive influence on eWOM, online clothing retailers should have clear pricing policies so that customers are clear about the costs involved and are not surprised by additional costs that can reduce customer satisfaction. Online clothing retailers can also implement flexible return and exchange policies, so that customers can easily return products when they are not satisfied. Online clothing organisations can ensure that customers are satisfied by adding the correct and most accurate product description on their website where the product is being advertised, providing clear instructions on how to use the product and giving care instructions for the types of fabrics used in the clothing item. Another way in which online clothing retailers can decrease perceived advertising deception and increase online customer satisfaction is to clearly state the return policy so that, even though a consumer might be unhappy with a purchase, they still have access to a hassle-free return policy. Also, online clothing retailers can make sure that they add the size guidelines on their website so that customers can easily make the right purchase decision. When online clothing retailers use these practical recommendations and customers are satisfied, this will lead the satisfied customers to purchase

again in the future and also to leave a positive eWOM comment. Online clothing retailers can also participate in social media engagement by being regularly active and present on social media platforms and by replying to customers' comments and to their inquiries.

Online clothing retailers should invest in customer service by responding to questions, complaints and problems as soon as possible and by offering an informed and responsive customer service. Online clothing retailers can also enhance transparency in advertising by making sure that product descriptions and advertising are truthful and clear about the products; also, inflated or untrue claims should be avoided. Customer satisfaction should also be prioritised by providing outstanding customer service throughout the entire shopping and purchasing process, including after-sales assistance. Satisfied customers could also be encouraged to partake in leaving positive feedback on the website after the purchase. Customers who participate in eWOM feedback can also be offered special sale items or special discounts on their next purchases. The ultimate objective is to establish a beneficial feedback loop in which openness and customer satisfaction result in positive eWOM, which in turn promotes repeat business. Online clothing retailers who put these steps first can win customers' trust, get them back to make more purchases and encourage them to tell others about their excellent experiences.

### Limitations and future research

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there are no current published studies that have investigated the relationships between perceived advertising deception, online customer satisfaction, eWOM and online repurchase intentions specifically within the online clothing industry. Consequently, the study relied on literature from other industries and international contexts to formulate the theoretical foundations of this study.

Additionally, while existing research investigated various consequences of online customer satisfaction, this study focused only on eWOM and online repurchase intentions, as they were most relevant to the clothing industry and research objectives. Also, the study was conducted in Gauteng province, South Africa, limiting the generalisability of the findings. Because of the *South African Protection of Personal Information (POPI) Act*, non-probability sampling was used, which may have introduced representative bias. The study made use of cross-sectional data, which can lead to selection and response bias and does not capture changes in consumer perceptions over time.

Future research might investigate additional antecedents of online customer satisfaction in the online clothing industry, such as website usability, trust or perceived value, and examine how these factors influence repurchase intentions and eWOM. The structural model could be extended to other industries, such as electronic purchases and travel, and other contexts, such as developed countries. Expanding the model to include advertising ethics and scepticism as possible

moderators or mediators could provide further insights into the impact on repurchase intentions and eWOM. Future studies can consider using different sampling techniques to enhance the representativeness of results and adopt a longitudinal approach to investigate how consumer perceptions evolve over time.

## Acknowledgements

This article is based on research originally conducted as part of Benecia van Staden's master's thesis entitled 'Investigating the consequences of perceived advertising deception within the online retail environment in the Gauteng Province', submitted to the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences, North-West University in 2024. The thesis was supervised by Mia Bothma. The manuscript has since been revised and adapted for journal publication. The original thesis is currently unpublished and was not publicly available online at the time of publishing this article.

### Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no financial or personal relationships that may have inappropriately influenced them in writing this article.

### CRedit authorship contribution

Mia Bothma: Conceptualisation, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing. Benecia van Staden: Conceptualisation, Writing – review & editing. All authors reviewed the article, contributed to the discussion of results, approved the final version for submission and publication, and take responsibility for the integrity of its findings.

### Funding information

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

### Data availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, Mia Bothma, upon reasonable request.

### Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and are the product of professional research. They do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated institution, funder, agency or publisher. The authors are responsible for this article's results, findings and content.

## References

Agarwal, S., Wang, L. & Yang, Y., 2021, 'Impact of transboundary air pollution on service quality and consumer satisfaction', *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization* 192(1), 357–380. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3189351>

- AGCM, 2024, *PS12709 - Italian Competition Authority: Investigation launched against Shein for possible misleading advertising*, viewed 18 November 2025, from <https://en.agcm.it/en/media/press-releases/2024/9/PS12709>.
- Ahrens, J., Coyle, J.R. & Strahilevitz, M.A., 2013, 'Electronic word of mouth: The effects of incentives on e-referrals by senders and receivers', *European Journal of Marketing* 47(7), 1034–1051. <https://doi.org/10.1108/03090561311324192>
- Ai, J., Gursoy, D., Liu, Y. & Lv, X., 2022, 'Effects of offering incentives for reviews on trust: Role of review quality and incentive source', *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 100(1), 103101. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2021.103101>
- Akhtar, N., Ahmad, W., Siddiqi, U.I. & Akhtar, M.N., 2019, 'Predictors and outcomes of consumer deception in hotel reviews: The roles of reviewer type and attribution of service failure', *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Management* 39(1), 65–75. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2019.03.004>
- Appel, G., Grewal, L., Hadi, R. & Stephen, A.T., 2020, 'The future of social media in marketing', *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 48(1), 79–95. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-019-00695-1>
- Au, A.K. & Wong, N.C., 2019, 'Perceived deception in negotiation: Consequences and the mediating role of trust', *Journal of Social Psychology* 159(4), 459–473. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00224545.2019.1567454>
- Aydoğan, S. & Aktan, M., 2019, 'Who is engaged in e-WOM? Role of e-loyalty, demographics, visit frequency and product category', *Pazarlama ve Pazarlama Araştırmaları Dergisi* 12(24), 207–234.
- Baron, R.M. & Kenny, D.A., 1986, 'The moderator–mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 51(6), 1173. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.51.6.1173>
- Brown, M.E. & Dueñas, A.N., 2020, 'A medical science educator's guide to selecting a research paradigm: Building a basis for better research', *Medical Science Educator* 30(1), 545–553. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40670-019-00898-9>
- Burnell, P., 2024, *BBC News*, viewed 04 March 2025, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cyjdn1ekzxo>.
- BusinessTech, 2025, *Major South African bank fined for misleading advertising*, viewed 01 July 2025, from <https://business.tech.co.za/news/banking/821695/major-south-african-bank-fined-for-misleading-advertising/>.
- Camargo, L.R., Pereira, S.C.F. & Scarpin, M.R.S., 2020, 'Fast and ultra-fast fashion supply chain management: An exploratory research', *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management* 48(6), 537–553. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJRD-04-2019-0133>
- Chang, J. & Wang, S., 2019, 'Different levels of destination expectation: The effects of online advertising and electronic word-of-mouth', *Telematics and Informatics* 36(1), 27–38. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2018.11.004>
- Chaouachi, S.G. & Rached, K.S.B., 2019, 'Perceived deception in advertising: Antecedents and consequences', *European Journal of Management and Marketing Studies* 3(4), 123–141. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.2965536>
- Cronbach, L.J., 1951, 'Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests', *Psychometrika* 16(3), 297–334. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02310555>
- Crouth, G., 2023, *Truworthis' promises of fashion vouchers misleading, rules regulator*, viewed 07 March 2025, from <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2023-08-07-truworthis-promises-of-fashion-vouchers-misleading-rules-regulator/>.
- Devi, A.A.D.T. & Yasa, N.N.K., 2021, 'The role of customer satisfaction in mediating the influence of service quality and perceived value on brand and loyalty', *International Research Journal of Management, IT and Social Sciences* 8(3), 315–328. <https://doi.org/10.21744/irjmis.v8n3.1786>
- Díaz, A., Gómez, M. & Molina, A., 2017, 'A comparison of online and offline consumer behaviour: An empirical study on a cinema shopping context', *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services* 38(1), 44–50. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2017.05.003>
- Emaluta, F. & Soewarno, N., 2019, 'The effect of customer relationship management CRM to customers' loyalty and customers' satisfaction as mediator variables', *Jurnal AKSI Akuntansi Dan Sistem Informasi* 4(2), 59–63. <http://doi.org/10.32486/aksi.v4i2.352>
- Fazal-e-Hasan, S.M., Ahmadi, H., Kelly, L. & Lings, I.N., 2019, 'The role of brand innovativeness and customer hope in developing online repurchase intentions', *Journal of Brand Management* 26(2), 85–98. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41262-018-0122-4>
- Gourkar, V., 2023, 'Effects of deceptive and unethical marketing on consumer behaviour', PhD thesis, National College of Ireland, Dublin.
- Gshayyish, A.M., 2023, 'Marketing deception and its impact on customer satisfaction', *Galaxy International Interdisciplinary Research Journal* 11(1), 27–38.
- Gunawan, I., 2022, 'Customer loyalty: The effect of customer satisfaction, experiential marketing and product quality', *Jurnal Manajemen Organisasi dan Industri* 1(1), 35–50. <https://doi.org/10.37481/jmoi.v1i1.6>
- Hair Jr, J.F., Howard, M.C. & Nitzl, C., 2020, 'Assessing measurement model quality in PLS-SEM using confirmatory composite analysis', *Journal of Business Research* 109(1), 101–110. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.11.069>
- Halim, R.E., Rahmani, S., Gayatri, G., Furinto, A. & Sutarso, Y., 2022, 'The effectiveness of product sustainability claims to mitigate negative electronic word of mouth NeWOM', *Sustainability* 14(5), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14052>
- Held, J. & Germelmann, C.C., 2018, 'Deception in consumer behavior research: A literature review on objective and perceived deception', *Projectics/Proyética/Projectique* 21(3), 119–145. <https://doi.org/10.3917/proj.021.0119>
- Hofmann, S.G., Curtiss, J.E. & Hayes, S.C., 2020, 'Beyond linear mediation: Toward a dynamic network approach to study treatment processes', *Clinical Psychology Review* 76(1), 101824. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2020.101824>
- Jain, M., Dixit, S. & Shukla, A., 2023, 'Role of e-service quality, brand commitment and e-WOM trust on e-WOM intentions of millennials', *International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research* 33(1), 23–43. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09593969.2022.2070860>
- Jia, L., Cegielski, L. & Zhang, Q., 2014, 'The effect of trust on customers online repurchase intention in consumer-to-consumer electronic commerce', *Journal of Organizational and End User Computing* 26(3), 65–86. <https://doi.org/10.4018/joeuc.2014070104>
- Joseph, M. & Nimako, S.G., 2015, 'Modeling the antecedent and consequence of customer perceived deception in loan services', *International Journal of Financial Research* 6(1), 43–55. <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijfr.v6n1p43>
- Kala, D. & Chaubey, D.S., 2018, 'The effect of eWOM communication on brand image and purchase intention towards lifestyle products in India', *International Journal of Services, Economics and Management* 9(2), 143–157. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJSEM.2018.096077>
- Kaur, S., Lal, A.K. & Bedi, S.S., 2017, 'Do vendor cues influence purchase intention of online shoppers? An empirical study using SOR framework', *Journal of Internet Commerce* 16(4), 343–363.
- Ku, C.-J., Hsu, Y.-S., Chang, M.-C. & Lin, K.-Y., 2022, 'A model for examining middle school students' stem integration behavior in a national technology competition', *International Journal of STEM Education* 9(1), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40594-021-00321-z>
- Li, F., Larimo, J. & Leonidou, L.C., 2021, 'Social media marketing strategy: Definition, conceptualization, taxonomy, validation, and future agenda', *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 49(1), 51–70. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-020-00733-3>
- Lim, J.S., Chock, T.M. & Golan, G.J., 2020, 'Consumer perceptions of online advertising of weight loss products: The role of social norms and perceived deception', *Journal of Marketing Communications* 26(2), 145–165. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2018.1469543>
- Oktaviani, N., Astuti, W. & Firdiansjah, A., 2019, 'Pengaruh Kepuasan Konsumen Terhadap Pembentukan Komitmen Pelanggan dan e-WOM Pada Pengguna Aplikasi e-Money "OVO"', *Jurnal Manajemen Dan Pemasaran Jasa* 12(1), 93–112. <https://doi.org/10.25105/jmpj.v12i1.3757>
- Oliver, R.L., 1997, *Satisfaction: A behavioral perspective on the customer*, McGraw-Hill Inc., New York, NY.
- Pandiangan, S.M.T., Resmawa, I., Simanjuntak, O.D.P. & Sitompul, P.N., 2021, 'Effect of e-satisfaction on repurchase intention in Shopee user students', *Budapest International Research and Critics Institute-Journal BIRCI-Journal* 4(4), 7785–7791. <https://doi.org/10.33258/birci.v4i4.2697>
- Paul, J., Ueno, A., Dennis, C., Alamanos, E., Curtis, L., Foroudi, P. et al., 2024, 'Digital transformation: A multidisciplinary perspective and future research agenda', *International Journal of Consumer Studies* 48(2), 13015. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.13015>
- Petrescu, M., Mingione, M., Gironda, J. & Brotspies, H., 2019, 'Ad scepticism and retouch-free disclaimers: Are they worth it?', *Journal of Marketing Communications* 25(7), 738–762. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2018.1437552>
- Pettinger, R., Jamil, G.L. & Roja, A.A., 2022, *Handbook of research on digital transformation management and tools*, IGI Global Publisher of Timely Knowledge, Hershey, PA.
- Podsakoff, P.M., MacKenzie, S.B., Lee, J.Y. & Podsakoff, N.P., 2003, 'Common method biases in behavioral research: A critical review of the literature and recommended remedies', *Journal of Applied Psychology* 88(5), 879–903. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.88.5.879>
- Prayag, G., Hosany, S., Muskat, B. & Del Chiappa, G., 2017, 'Understanding the relationships between tourist's emotional experiences, perceived overall image, satisfaction, and intention to recommend', *Journal of Travel Research* 56(1), 41–54. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287515620567>
- Purba, F.R. & Paramita, E.L., 2021, 'The influence of e-WOM and customer satisfaction on purchasing decisions', *International Journal of Social Science and Business* 5(4), 575–585. <https://doi.org/10.23887/ijssb.v5i4.40447>
- Rahmawaty, S., Kartawinata, B.R., Akbar, A. & Wijaksana, T.I., 2021, 'The effect of e-service quality and e-trust on e-customer loyalty through e-customer satisfaction as an intervening variable', *Proceedings of the International Conference on Industrial Engineering and Operations Management* 7(11), 5495–5506. <https://doi.org/10.46254/AN11.20210933>
- Ramapele, 2023, *News24*, viewed 06 March 2025, from <https://www.news24.com/fin24/consumer-lookout/advertising-regulatory-board-finds-ted-bakers-sale-advert-misleading-20230928>.
- Rinjit, K., 2011, *Research methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners*, Sage, London.
- Riquelme, I.P. & Román, S., 2014, 'The influence of customers' cognitive and psychographic traits on perceived deception: A comparison between online and offline retailing contexts', *Journal of Organisation Ethics* 119(3), 405–422. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-013-1628-z>
- Riquelme, I.P., Román, S. & Iacobucci, D., 2016, 'Consumers' perceptions of online and offline retailer deception: A moderated mediation analysis', *Journal of Interactive Marketing* 35(1), 16–26. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2016.01.002>
- Romadhoni, B., Akhmad, A., Naldah, N. & Rossanty, N.P.E., 2023, 'Purchasing decisions effect of social media marketing, electronic word of mouth eWOM, purchase intention', *Journal of Accounting and Finance Management* 4(1), 74–86. <https://doi.org/10.38035/jafm.v4i1.194>
- Salloum, S.A., Al-Emran, M., Monem, A.A. & Shaalan, K., 2017, 'A survey of text mining in social media: Facebook and Twitter perspectives', *Advances in Science, Technology and Engineering Systems Journal* 2(1), 127–133. <https://doi.org/10.25046/aj020115>

- Setyaning, A.N.A. & Nugroho, S.S., 2020, 'The influence of website characteristics on customer satisfaction and e-WOM in Indonesia', *Jurnal Siasat Bisnis* 1(1), 148–167. <https://doi.org/10.20885/jsb.vol24.iss2.art5>
- Siddiqi, U.I., Sun, J. & Akhtar, N., 2020, 'Ulterior motives in peer and expert supplementary online reviews and customers' perceived deception', *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics* 33(1), 73–98. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-06-2019-0399>
- Statistics SA, 2025, *Statistics South Africa*, viewed 09 March 2025, from <https://www.statssa.gov.za/>.
- Sultan, P., Wong, H.Y. & Azam, M.S., 2021, 'How perceived communication source and food value stimulate purchase intention of organic food: An examination of the stimulus-organism-response SOR model', *Journal of Cleaner Production* 312(1), 127807. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2021.127807>
- Tarnanidis, T., Papachristou, E., Karypidis, M. & Ismyrlis, V. (eds.), 2023, 'How social media affects consumer behavior in the fashion industry', in *Social media and online consumer decision making in the fashion industry*, pp. 324–337, IGI Global, Hershey, PA.
- Trivedi, S.K. & Yadav, M., 2020, 'Repurchase intentions in Y generation: Mediation of trust and e-satisfaction', *Marketing Intelligence and Planning* 38(4), 401–415. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MIP-02-2019-0072>
- Tsao, W.C. & Hsieh, M.T., 2012, 'Exploring how relationship quality influences positive eWOM: The importance of customer commitment', *Total Quality Management and Organisation Excellence* 23(7), 821–835. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14783363.2012.661137>
- Virdi, I., 2020, 'Impact of perceived deception on consumer behaviour: The case of detergent powder', *AIMS International Journal of Management* 14(1), 153–156. <https://doi.org/10.26573/2020.14.1.2>
- Wilson, A.E., Darke, P.R. & Sengupta, J., 2022, 'Winning the battle but losing the war: Ironic effects of training consumers to detect deceptive advertising tactics', *Journal of Business Ethics* 1(1), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-021-04937-7>
- Won, J. & Kim, B.Y., 2020, 'The effect of consumer motivations on purchase intention of online fashion-sharing platform', *Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business* 7(6), 197–207. <https://doi.org/10.13106/jafeb.2020.vol7.no6.197>
- Woodworth, R.S., 1958, *Dynamics of behavior*, Henry Holt and Company, New York, NY.
- Yang, Y. & Zhai, P., 2022, 'Click-through rate prediction in online advertising: A literature review', *Information Processing and Management* 59(2), 1–85. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ipm.2021.102853>
- Zhu, B., Kowatthanakul, S. & Satanasavapak, P., 2019, 'Generation Y consumer online repurchase intention in Bangkok: Based on stimulus-organism-response SOR model', *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management* 48(1), 53–69. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJRDM-04-2018-0071>
- Zollo, L., Filieri, R., Rialti, R. & Yoon, S., 2020, 'Unpacking the relationship between social media marketing and brand equity: The mediating role of consumers' benefits and experience', *Journal of Business Research* 117(1), 256–267. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.05.001>