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# HOW MARKETING DECEPTION AFFECTS CONSUMER TRUST AND INTENTIONS TO USE ONLINE RETAIL PLATFORMS

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## ABSTRACT

*This study examines the impact of deception and misleading marketing strategies on consumer trust and their intention to use online retail platforms. In this study, marketing deception is treated as an independent variable. At the same time, trust and the intention to use online platforms are regarded as dependent variables, with consumer trust acting as a mediator to explore the relationship between marketing deception and the intention to use online retail platforms. The study involved a sample of 509 participants who had experience with online retail platforms. Sub-hypotheses were investigated using regression in SPSS, while the main hypotheses were investigated using SEM in AMOS. The findings indicated that marketing deception hurts both consumer trust and the intention to use online retail platforms. Consumer trust was seen to have a considerable impact on the intention to use platforms. It has been shown that marketing deception undermines consumers' intentions to use platforms by eroding consumer trust. Based on these results, the study recommends that customers use retail platforms with caution, avoid deceptive retailers, and opt for trustworthy companies. Furthermore, it advises retailers to avoid dishonest business practices since they undermine consumer trust in their online platforms, erode their reputation, and weaken their market position.*

**KEYWORDS:** Misinformation, Unethical Practices, Marketing Strategy, Consumer Purchasing Behavior, Social Media, Retail Industry.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The wave of technological innovation is profoundly reshaping humanity by transforming how we communicate and protect knowledge (Mansour et al., 2022). Throughout history, communities have gathered and saved information in varied forms. However, the present technological revolution has introduced significant changes in the methods of knowledge sharing and storage (Joudeh et al., 2025). The rapid progress of technology facilitates easy access to information for individuals (Bernacki et al., 2019). These modern technological inventions have transformed the business landscape, prompting businesses to devise novel and inventive ways to engage with clients on this evolving platform (Ebrahim, 2019). Gurumurthy et al. (2020) and Hanandeh et al. (2024) found that businesses employing digital technology tend to have higher productivity and profitability. As online marketing continues to evolve, businesses must adapt their strategies to promote their products and services effectively. Warbung et al. (2023) emphasize that the improvement of e-marketing has modified conventional retail channels, making it more comfortable for businesses to transition to digital formats. Therefore, companies must adopt the latest technological advancements to capitalize on previously unexplored market opportunities and meet the evolving expectations of consumers. This shift in technology has contributed significantly to increased revenues and profits for many businesses.

Businesses have increasingly realized innovative ways to communicate, engage, and interact with customers by harnessing rapidly growing technology. This accessibility has allowed them to execute marketing strategies that are not only more attractive but also personalized, thereby reaching a broader customer base that aligns with their target demographics. Marketing is recognized for employing a range of techniques to meet customer needs, ultimately leading to increased satisfaction through the development of tailored results. This element is crucial because marketing strategies depend on consumers' attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. It contains the development and distribution of products and services, facilitated by effective communication with society, customers, and stakeholders (Haikal et al., 2020). Today, companies worldwide are underscoring sustainability and consumer retention, focusing on ensuring loyalty and fostering consumer commitment. These advances in reshaping marketing strategies yield effective marketing communication, which is vital for businesses seeking

to succeed in a competitive environment.

Marketing deception has become increasingly prevalent and is currently a significant topic in the business world. Marketing strategies need to be open and honest. Bian & Haque (2020) note that understanding the complexities of marketing strategies and consumer trust can provide a competitive advantage by supporting businesses to avoid dishonest practices. Such dishonest practices can harm a retailer's reputation and diminish its competitive advantage in the industry. Some retail firms employ deceptive practices on online platforms to increase sales and profits. Product deception involves overstating product features to make them appear more appealing, resulting in differences between online information and in-store offerings. Retailers also employ deceptive pricing tactics, such as failing to disclose full prices upfront or advertising products that are less beneficial than they appear to be. Further, promotions often lack accurate communication, leaving customers uncertain about their duration or the availability of popular products. By enhancing communication and providing more transparent product information, retailers can improve the shopping experience for consumers. Such practices harm and hurt genuine consumers, damaging the industry as a whole and potentially leading to legal fraud cases (Mandal, 2019; Ezeonu, 2018). Ethical marketing is characterized by the promotion of products in a truthful, transparent, and socially responsible way (Javed et al., 2014; Lee & Jin, 2019). Therefore, it is important to establish fair prices for products and services while providing consumers with accurate and detailed information (Javed et al., 2014; Chaouachi & Rached, 2012; Alfityani et al., 2026) stated that retailers may not intend to deceive, but their practices and messages can be perceived as unclear or doubtful.

The importance of this study lies in its detailed investigation and interpretation of consumer purchasing behaviors, especially their responses to marketing deception on online retail platforms. The study comprehensively analyzes how consumers respond to the information shown on retailer platforms, emphasizing the differences they encounter between information offered on online retail platforms and in-store facts. These differences ultimately impact their trust and future use of such platforms. The study categorizes marketing deception into three main types: product, price, and promotion. By examining these types, the study offers valuable and practical insights, contributing to the current body of literature in this area. Similarly, we precisely analyze the impact of marketing

deception on consumer trust and their intention to use online retail platforms—an aspect that, to the authors' knowledge, has been rarely studied. As a result, this study was conducted to answer the following questions.

RQ1: How does marketing deception influence consumer trust?

RQ2: How does marketing deception impact a consumer's intention to use the online retail platforms?

RQ3: How does consumer trust affect consumer intention to use the online retail platforms?

RQ4: How does marketing deception influence consumer intention to use the online retail platforms through consumer trust?

Based on the questions presented above, the main objectives of this study are delineated as follows:

RO1. Evaluate whether marketing deception impacts consumer trust.

RO2. Evaluate whether marketing deception affects a consumer's trust.

RO3. Examine whether consumer trust influences consumer intention to use the online retail platforms.

RO4. Investigate whether marketing deception affects consumers' intentions to use online retail platforms in relation to trust.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1. Marketing Deception

Marketing deception is described as the use of unethical and dishonest methods, as well as unethical or deceptive acts or practices (Sharma & Verma, 2018). According to Labuz (2023), deception poses a significant problem because of its widespread occurrence in the marketplace. Marketing deception poses a significant challenge for businesses and consumers due to the rapid dissemination of information that can be incorrect, inaccurate, or misleading, especially on social media platforms and websites (Cawley et al., 2013). Marketing deception refers to the use of false information that creates inflated expectations about products or services, price, promotion, and physical distribution. Marketing deception practices involve the intentional act of providing consumers with false or partial information to persuade them while fostering misconceptions in others about something the communicator acknowledges as untrue (Sunvy et al., 2024; Li & Wan, 2023). In marketing, deception occurs when a business employs unethical practices to gain an unfair advantage over competitors or customers by exploiting or manipulating consumer decisions. These tactics, nonetheless, can prove counterproductive, harming a company's reputation

over time (Wang et al., 2023; Wilson et al., 2021). The advantages derived from such methods are often fleeting, as consumers who detect these deceptive maneuvers are likely to be deterred from making future purchases (Hashem et al., 2026; He, 2020). The objective of fast growth, profitability, and market competitiveness often prompts retailers to engage in illegal and unethical practices, including the provision of misleading information (Mustak et al., 2022; Riquelme et al., 2016). These actions can harm consumers and threaten the industry's long-term health, often resulting in lawful conflicts over deception.

**H1:** Marketing deception significantly impacts consumer trust.

**H2:** Marketing deception significantly affects consumers' intention to use online retail platforms.

### 2.2. Consumer Trust

According to Lewicki et al. (1998), trust denotes a trustor's optimistic expectation regarding the trustee's behavior; conversely, distrust signifies a trustor's negative expectation of the trustee. Consumer trust refers to the expectation that consumers have that a retailer is reliable and can be counted on to fulfill its promises. In particular, when a trustor has significant trust in a trustee, they experience feelings of safety, security, optimism, confidence, and comfort (Kujala et al., 2015; Lewicki & Brinsfield, 2009). Establishing online trust is a crucial strategy for maintaining strong consumer relationships, as it is essential for the success of a retail business. Trust is important and is shaped by the perceived level of risk. A study by Handoyo et al. (2024) indicates that trust and safety play a significant role in purchasing decisions. Sound relationships between buyers and sellers are necessary for business success (Wang, 2023). In fact, different retailers have different levels of trust, conveying a crucial asset that requires ongoing commitment. Therefore, retailers should focus on building consumer trust and satisfaction in digital environments, as customers need to view businesses as reliable, or they might opt for their competitors instead (Darke et al., 2016; Almajali et al., 2021). In the absence of retailer trust, a detailed inquiry into information becomes essential to address doubts. Perceived deception indicates that retailers have violated the agreement regarding the guaranteed benefits offered to consumers (Pavlou, 2003). When a company engages in unethical and exploitative marketing practices, consumers are likely to lose faith in its products. Consumers are likely to buy less

as they start to steer clear of products from businesses that use unethical marketing (Li et al., 2019). Trust usually helps build brand loyalty, leading consumers to continue supporting brands even during tough times.

**H3:** Consumer trust has a significant impact on consumer intention to use online retail platforms.

Furthermore, the study proposed the following sub-hypothesis:

**H1a:** Product significantly influences consumer trust.

**H1b:** Price significantly impacts consumer trust.

**H1c:** Promotion significantly impacts consumer trust.

### 2.3. Intention To Use the Online Retail Platforms

Online retail platforms offer convenience, transparency, and a wide range of products, but ethical norms and responsible communication are vital for long-term success and maintaining consumer trust. Recently, online platforms have allowed fast communication and marketing between retailers and consumers, often proving more effective than traditional marketing methods (Al-Gasawneh et al., 2025; Zamil et al., 2024; Smith et al., 2018). Platforms offer a broader variety of product categories than commonly found in physical shops, enabling consumers to research products online before visiting brick-and-mortar locations. This thorough information-gathering process empowers consumers, enabling them to make more knowledgeable decisions and enhance their general purchasing experience. Consumers mostly rely on their prior knowledge and experiences to anticipate these perceived risks (AlSokkar et al., 2024; Nuseir, 2018). Therefore, Alnaser et al. (2024) and Nam & Kannan (2020) emphasized that the process of searching and obtaining information from various online platforms not only affects decision-making but also completely affects in-store purchasing behavior. Visiting online platforms provides

consumers with the opportunity to review products, prices, and offers before deciding on a purchase, presenting both challenges and opportunities for retailers. Román et al. (2019) assert that most retailers rely on face-to-face communication with customers.

**H4:** Marketing deception significantly influences consumers' intentions to use online retail platforms through its effect on trust.

**Additionally, the study put forward the following sub-hypothesis:**

**H2a:** Product significantly impacts consumers' intentions to use online retail platforms.

**H2b:** Price significantly affects consumer intention to use online retail platforms.

**H2c:** Promotion has a significant impact on consumer intention to use online retail platforms.

## 3. METHODS AND MATERIALS

### 3.1. Study Model

A conceptual model was established based on a comprehensive review of the existing literature to illustrate the impact of marketing deception on consumer trust and the intention to use online retail platforms, as depicted in Figure 1. This model posits that variables associated with marketing deception—namely product, price, and promotion—significantly influence consumer trust, leading to the formulation of three specific sub-hypotheses: H1a, H1b, and H1c. Furthermore, the model indicates that these three variables notably affect the intention to engage with online retail platforms, thereby underpinning the sub-hypotheses: H2a, H2b, and H2c. It is suggested that marketing deception exerts a substantial impact on both consumer trust and the intention to use online retail platforms, in alignment with Hypotheses 1 and 2. Hypothesis 3 (H3) further elucidates that consumer trust has an effective influence on the intention to use online platforms. It also suggests that consumer trust mediates the relationship between marketing deception and the intention to use these platforms, as hypothesized in H4.

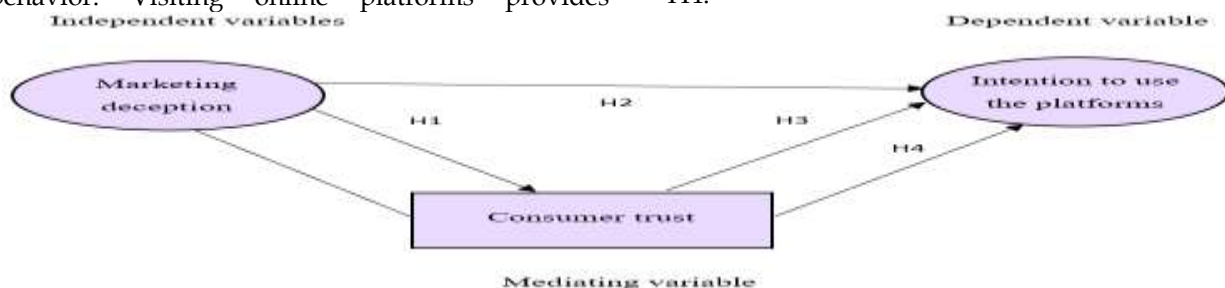


Figure 1: Proposed Model.

### 3.2. Data Collection

This study focused on consumers who gather

information from online retail platforms and subsequently complete their purchases at physical retail stores. A questionnaire was used to gather data to assess the suggested hypotheses. The distribution and collection of the questionnaire were conducted via a Google Form, which was shared with active Jordanian consumers who engage with retail platforms to compare products, prices, and offers before making a purchase decision. A total of 547 responses were collected using a convenience sample, with 28 invalids due to incomplete answers. As a result, 509 responses were confirmed for statistical analysis, describing 93% of the total sample. The primary data for this study were collected from July 2025 to the end of October 2025. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first section gathered demographic information from respondents, including their gender, marital status, educational background, and income. In the second section, participants evaluated various elements of marketing deception—such as product, pricing, and promotion—using a Likert scale, where 1 indicated strongly disagree, and 5 indicated "strongly agree."

**3.3. Statistical Analysis**

To test the stated hypotheses, convergent validity,

Cronbach's alpha, and model fit were employed to confirm the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. SPSS was used to analyze sub-hypotheses, while AMOS's SEM was used to analyze the main hypotheses.

**4. RESULTS**

**4.1. Descriptive Statistics**

Table 1 shows the attributes of the study sample. In terms of gender distribution among respondents, it is observed that male participants comprised 62.5% of the total sample, while females represented a smaller proportion at 37.5%. By marital status, 58% of the analyzed population was married, and 42% was single. In terms of age, participants aged 30 or younger constituted 31%, with the highest percentage found among those aged 31 to 40, who represented 42% of the total, and the smallest group at 9%. In terms of education, 31% of participants had completed high school or lower, 54% had bachelor's degrees, and 15% had postgraduate degrees. The largest group consisted of participants earning between JD501 and JD1000, at 39%, followed by those making JD500 or less at 23%. The smallest category consisted of participants with incomes exceeding JD 1501, accounting for 10%.

*Table 1: Demographics Sample.*

Variables	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
Gender	Male	318	62.5
	Female	191	37.5
Marital status	Married	294	58
	Single	215	42
Age	< 30 years	158	31
	31-40	211	41
	41-50	94	19
	> 50 years	46	9
Education	Secondary school	156	31
	undergraduate	275	54
	postgraduate	78	15
Monthly income \$1 = JD 0.71	< 500	142	28
	501- 1000	201	39
	1001-1500	114	23
	> 1500	52	10

**4.2. Questionnaire Analysis**

This study used convergent validity to assess the measurement model. Convergent validity consists of factor loading (FL), composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). Table 2, which displays (FL) values ranging from 0.618 to 0.881, surpasses the threshold of 0.50 or above, as recommended by Sarstedt et al. (2021). CR values

ranging from .805 to .875 and AVE values between 0.503 and 0.638, exceeding the 0.70 and .50 requirements recommended by Gefen & Straub (2005). The study's reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with values surpassing 0.70 indicating a reliable scale. Table 3 reveals that the study's Cronbach's alpha results are above the standard threshold of 0.70, ranging from 0.826 to

0.908, confirming reliability as recommended by Sekaran and Bougie (2010).

Moreover, the study showed that participants had positive attitudes toward the study statements, with all mean scores exceeding the scale mean of 3.00. All

variables had mean scores greater than 3.00, indicating positive opinions. The highest mean score was "marketing deception" (3.89/5.00), followed by "consumer trust" (3.68/5.00). The lowest mean score was 3.38/5.00 for "intention to use retail platforms."

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Marketing Deception, Consumer Trust, And Intention to Use the Platform.**

Variable	Statement	FL	CR	AVE	Alpha
Product	The platform makes its products seem more attractive than they are.	.782			
	The platform overstates the benefits and features of its offerings. It makes them seem better than they are.	.769			
	The information about the products on the platform is different from what is available in the actual store.	.831	.721	.822	.713
	The platform does not show details about problems with its products that can be seen in person.	.611			
	The products in the store do not match the quality displayed on the platform.	.828			
Price	This platform does not fully disclose its pricing.	.798			
	This platform exaggerates the attraction of its prices.	.789			
	The amounts paid at the point of sale exceed the advertised prices.	.762	.777	.846	.744
	A comparison of price and quality reveals that the charges are significantly higher.	.813			
	The price is raised above the normal level, and discounts are offered to make customers feel they are saving money.	.848			
Promotion	The platform does not completely disclose its offerings.	.761			
	The duration of the promotion is not clearly stated.	.623			
	Every time I visit the shop during the discount event, they consistently have no stock.	.742	.791	.847	.762
	The platform is promoting products with insufficient product details.	.599			
	The platform employs deceptive tactics to persuade people to purchase its products.	.810			
Consumer trust	I cannot place my trust in platforms due to the unreliability of the information presented.	.806			
	I cannot place my trust in platforms that utilize inaccurate information.	.791	.899	.923	.864
	I cannot trust platforms that engage in unethical marketing practices.	.758			
Intention to use	I will refrain from seeking details from this platform moving forward.	.847			
	I will not suggest this platform to my acquaintances.	.858	.721	.879	.801
	I will deactivate this platform.	.835			
	I will not use the platform in the future.	.734			

### 4.3. Testing of Sub-Hypotheses

Tables 3 and 4 present the results of simple and multiple regression analyses that examine the relationships among marketing deception, consumer trust, and the intention to use the online retail platform.

#### 4.4.1. Testing of Sub-Hypotheses H1a, H1b, H1c

Table 3 shows the significant impact of marketing components, including product, price, and promotions, on consumer trust. The first sub-hypothesis (H1a) showed that deception in the

product significantly impacts customer trust ( $\beta = 24.7\%$ ;  $P = .000$ ). The sub-hypothesis (H1b) indicated that deception in pricing has a significant impact on consumer trust ( $\beta = 21.3\%$ ;  $P = .000$ ). Furthermore, sub-hypothesis (H1c) confirmed that deception in promotion significantly impacts consumer trust ( $\beta = 15.8\%$ ;  $P = .000$ ). The results show that sub-hypotheses H1a, H1b, and H1c reveal a significant impact on consumer trust due to marketing deception in product, price, and promotion, with product holding the most significant impact, followed by price and promotion. Multiple

regression analysis revealed that marketing deception has a significant impact on consumer trust (F = 106, p < .000), with an adjusted R<sup>2</sup> of 0.35.

**Table 3: The Impact of Marketing Deception on Consumer Trust.**  
ANOVA

	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Error	F	Sig.
	.515	.352	.350	.518	106	.000

Coefficients					
Variable	B	Std. Error	β	T	Sig.
Product	.296	.062	.247	3.438	.000
Price	.253	.074	.213	2.274	.000
Promotion	.228	.078	.158	2.091	.000

**4.3.2. Testing Of Sub-Hypotheses H2a, H2b, H2c**

Table 4 presents the findings for sub-hypotheses H2a, H2b, and H2c, which use regression analyses to examine the impact of marketing deception variables—product, price, and promotion—on consumers' intentions to use the online retail platform. The results for sub-hypothesis H2a indicate that deception in products has a significant impact on marketing deception on consumer intentions, with β = 47.4% and p = .000. Price has a significant impact on intention to use the online retail platform, as

indicated by sub-hypothesis H2b (β = 64.1, p = 0.000). In comparison, sub-hypothesis H2c revealed that deception in promotions has a significant influence (β = 76.6%, p = .000). The results confirm that sub-hypotheses H2a, H2b, and H2c indicate that marketing deception in product, price, and promotion significantly damages consumer trust in online retail platforms, with promotion being the most impacted, followed by price and product. Furthermore, multiple regression analysis confirms these findings, with an F-value of 106 and an adjusted R-squared value of 0.455.

**Table 4: The Impact of Marketing Deception on Intention to Use the Online Retail Platform.**  
ANOVA

	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Error	F	Sig.
	.664	.467	.453	.556	175	.000

Coefficients					
Variable	B	Std. Error	β	T	Sig.
Product	.552	.046	.474	10.845	.000
Price	.727	.053	.641	12.126	.000
Promotion	.835	.056	.766	14.911	.000

**4.4. Testing Main Hypotheses**

Fit indices should be used to evaluate the study's main hypotheses per SEM recommendations. As illustrated in Table 5, the χ<sup>2</sup>/df ratio is 3.469, below the threshold of 5. AGFI is .924, exceeding .80. RMSEA is .093, below 0.10. NFI is .945, CFI is 0.937, and GFI is .954, all above 0.90. Thus, the model meets the criteria set by Tabachnick & Fidell (2001), Hu & Bentler (1999), Shevlin & Miles (1998), and MacCallum et al. (1996).

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**Table 5: Fit Index Values.**

	AGFI	$\chi^2/df$	GFI	RMSEA	CFI	NFI
Suggested value	> 0.80	< 5	> 0.90	≤ 0.10	> 0.90	> 0.90
Value of the model	.924	3.469	.954	.093	.937	.945

The study utilized path coefficient analysis to evaluate the main hypotheses. The results are presented in Table 6 and Figure 2, which show the direct and indirect effects of latent variables. All results were statistically significant at  $P < 0.05$ , aligning with the proposed hypotheses and their associated outcomes. Deception has an impact on consumer trust. Hypothesis H1 is supported with  $t = 7.553$ ,  $\beta = .386$ , and  $p = .000$ , indicating statistical significance. Hypothesis H2 is supported, as marketing deception has a significant impact on

intention to use an online retail platform ( $t = 4.647$ ,  $\beta = .324$ , and  $p = .000$ ). Hypothesis H3 examines the impact of consumer trust on intention to use the retail platform. The analysis yields a t-value of 13.377 and a  $\beta$ -value of 0.526, with a p-value of 0.000, indicating a statistically significant relationship and confirming Hypothesis H3. Furthermore, hypothesis H4 examines the impact of marketing deception on consumer online retail platforms. With  $t = 2.586$ ,  $\beta = 0.227$ , and  $p = 0.000$ , the results demonstrate a significant effect, supporting Hypothesis H4.

Table 6: Of The Path Model Indicates That Marketing

Variables	Direct impact	Indirect impact	T-value	P	Results
Consumer trust <--- Marketing deception	.386		7.553	.000	Accepted
Online retail platforms <--- Marketing deception	.324		4.647	.000	Accepted
Online retail platforms <--- Consumer trust	.526		13.377	.000	Accepted
Online retail platforms Consumer trust Marketing deception	-	.227	2.586	.000	Accepted

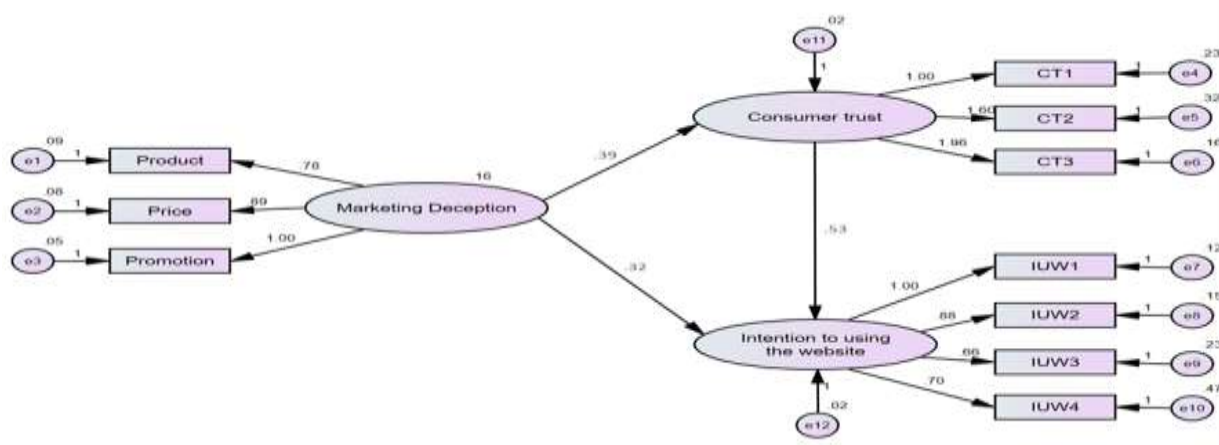


Figure 2: Path Coefficient Analysis.

5. DISCUSSION

This study investigates how consumers perceive marketing deception on retail platforms. It analyzes the impact of deceptive marketing on the behaviors of 509 customers who normally gather information before conducting a purchase. The results reveal that marketing deception has a significant impact on consumers' trust and their intention to use an online retail platform. Additionally, consumer trust serves as a mediating factor in the positive relationship between marketing deception and online retail

platforms. The findings of the study support all proposed hypotheses and were evaluated using regression analysis and the SEM path model.

The first set of sub-hypotheses in the study (H1a, H1b, and H1c) was confirmed, indicating that deceptive marketing hurts consumer trust. The findings indicate that marketing deception can erode consumer trust in online retail platforms, with product quality having the most critical impact, followed by price and promotion. Especially, trust was significantly impacted by deceptive promotional

information ( $\beta = 57.5\%$ ;  $P < .001$ ), pricing information ( $\beta = 36\%$ ;  $P = .059$ ), and product information ( $\beta = 24.4\%$ ;  $P < .001$ ). Furthermore, the second set of sub-hypotheses (H2a, H2b, and H2c) was also validated, revealing that deceptive marketing regarding the intention to use online retail platforms decreases the likelihood of consumer engagement, with promotion being the most affected, followed by price and product. The results indicated that consumers' intentions to use retail platforms were significantly impacted by marketing deceptions related to false promotional claims ( $\beta = 57.5\%$ ;  $P < .001$ ), product information ( $\beta = 24.4\%$ ;  $P < .001$ ), and pricing ( $\beta = 3.6\%$ ;  $P < .001$ ). The findings reveal that various forms of marketing deception can lower consumers' intentions to use online retail platforms that engage in unethical practices.

The study confirmed a significant relationship between marketing deception and consumer trust, thereby validating the first hypothesis (H1). It was defined that marketing deception has a considerable influence on consumers' intentions to use online retail platforms, accounting for 38.6% of the variance in this behavioral effect. These results highlight the significant impact of deceptive practices on consumer trust, which can substantially influence their decision-making processes when interacting with online retail platforms as sources of information. In the analysis related to the second hypothesis (H2), a clear relationship was identified between marketing deception and online retail platforms. The results indicate that 32.4% of consumer intentions to use retail platforms can be attributed to this relationship. The findings underscore the negative consequences of marketing deception, which hinders potential customers from engaging with online platforms and determines overall consumer interaction.

In response to the third hypothesis (H3), the results revealed that consumer trust plays an important role in influencing the intention to use online retail platforms, accounting for 52.6% of the total impact on consumer behavior. This result underscores the crucial role of trust in shaping consumer interactions and behaviors with online retail platforms. The evidence shows a direct relationship, wherein heightened levels of consumer trust are positively associated with the intention to engage with these platforms, while significantly reduced trust is associated with decreased consumer engagement. Similarly, the result of the fourth hypothesis (H4) showed a significant indirect impact of marketing deception on consumer trust, with a mediation rate of 22.7%. This study suggests a

complex relationship in which marketing deception not only exercises a direct impact on consumer behavior but also damages trust, thereby decreasing the intention to utilize online retail platforms. The findings discussed herein provide a thorough understanding of the implications of deceptive marketing practices on consumer behavior and trust in online retail environments.

The study indicates that marketing deception in product, price, and promotion breaks consumer trust and intention to use online retail platforms. When consumers discover deception, there is a significant decrease in their trust and intention to use these retail platforms. Deceptive practices linked to product use by retailers include overstating a product's features beyond their real capabilities, overstating benefits, and falsely claiming superiority. Other deceptive practices include providing dishonest information about products, failing to disclose prices, and displaying inferior-quality products online. In the realm of pricing, various deceptive strategies can be employed, such as hiding the total price, presenting prices in a manner that makes them appear lower than they actually are, promoting lower initial prices that ultimately result in higher overall expenditures, and using comparisons that increase the perceived price.

Additionally, false discounts can deceive consumers into believing they are getting a good deal when, in fact, they are not. Deceptive marketing practices in promotions may occur when sellers fail to provide complete information about their offers, when the duration of the promotion is vague, when products are unavailable during a sale, or when the information provided about products is insufficient. Other deceptive techniques may also be used to entice consumers into making purchases.

Finally, the results of this study align with the previous studies conducted by Hashem (2024), He et al. (2022), Wilson et al. (2021), Bian & Haque (2020), Mandal (2019), Ezeonu (2018), Javed et al. (2014), and Chaouachi & Rached (2012), which showed that consumers who recognize these deceptive tactics are likely to be discouraged from making purchases in the future. The results also support the findings of Handoyo et al. (2024), Li et al. (2019), Kujala et al. (2016), Darke & Ritchie (2007), and Pavlou (2003), which indicate that a lack of trust will ruin the relationship between the consumer and the retailer. In addition, this study agrees with the findings of Román et al. (2019) and Smith et al. (2018), who found that marketing deception can significantly damage retailers by leading to consumer complaints, dissatisfaction, changes in purchasing behavior, and

distrust, all of which can ultimately harm the business's reputation and intention to use their platforms.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Marketing deception is a dishonest practice that can erode consumer trust, reduce intention to use online retail platforms, and foster negative perceptions of future transactions. Furthermore, such deceptive practices can tarnish a company's image, reducing its competitiveness against competitors who adhere to higher standards of marketing ethics. The lack of consumer advocacy organizations, combined with insufficient quality-control protocols,

is fuelling the rising incidence of marketing deception. Retailers who employ deceptive methods to defraud customers by exaggerating product or service attributes, pricing, or marketing strategies should face legal consequences and fines. Consequently, the research encourages consumers to tread carefully when exploring online retail platforms, steer clear of misleading information tactics, and opt for trustworthy companies. Additionally, the study advises that organizations avoid dishonest practices, as these actions can damage trust, blemish their image, stifle market competition, and adversely affect consumer confidence and their intention to use their retail platforms.

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