

Original Article

# Effect of Deceptive Advertisements on Consumer Buying Behaviour in Personal Care Products

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## ABSTRACT

This study aimed to measure the relationship between deceptive advertisements and consumer buying behavior with mediating effects of product satisfaction and retailer satisfaction in personal care products. The first mediation is that perceived deception affected retailer satisfaction through product satisfaction, whereas the second mediation is that perceived deception affects consumer loyalty and word of mouth through retailer satisfaction. The primary data was collected from the 384 respondents through convenience sampling based on the expectancy disconfirmation theory. PLS-SEM was applied to the data for hypothesis testing. The results of this research indicate that deceptive advertisements have a direct negative impact on product satisfaction and retailer satisfaction. Moreover, both the mediating variables (product satisfaction and retailer satisfaction) significantly affect consumer loyalty and word of mouth. However, all hypotheses were supported and substantiated with the help of the earlier studies conducted in this context and remain consistent with them. This study enriches the literature related to the effects of deceptive advertising on buying behavior and provides the understanding that will help in reducing perceived deception. This refers to the inclusion of honesty in sales practices and the exclusion of deceptive advertising practices in online and offline retailing. Moreover, this study is also helpful for consumers in buying decision-making.

**Keywords:** *Consumer loyalty, Deceptive advertisement, Product satisfaction, Retailer satisfaction, Word of mouth*

## INTRODUCTION

Advertisement is a way of communicating and creating awareness about a product. This is a powerful source of convincing and influencing consumer behaviour in recent days. Most businesses are doing deceptive marketing, which becomes the cause of monetary, time, and emotional problems and are often reported by customers on different forums (Rao, 2022; Chaudary et al., 2014). The marketing of FMCGs plays a crucial role in the country's economic growth. Most companies and market influencers were involved in violating the cosmetics laws and in the usage of deceptive pictures of skin care products. Visual effects play a vital role in commercials; they attract consumers and develop trustworthiness, hence, retaining memory. For instance, those products that have the name of the region that doesn't show where the product was manufactured, not even its ingredients section can mislead the customers (Punnahitanond, 2018). These appeals, either rational or emotional, sometimes overbuild customer expectations.

The prior studies theorized that beauty is a biological or natural trait but recent studies showed that changes and enhancement of body attractiveness and enhancement could be done in multiple ways by cosmetics and other beauty treatments. Women's body shape, hair, skin, and faces shown in advertisements of personal care products were based on beauty work or cosmetology to achieve consumer attention (Rao, 2022). The lack of transparent disclosures and further deceptive advertising tactics can make consumers perceived as fooled, which will lead to negative attitudes toward the advertisement as the marketer and company (Krouwer et al., 2020; Neama & AL-

Sammarraie, 2024). This is why many commercials take advantage of the customer's frustration caused by past unsuccessful experiences, which produces the misleading advertisement typology and claims that the purchasers have a constant belief in deceptive advertising of personal care products was often derived from the trust perseverance tendency (Lim et al., 2020).

The emotional appeals may divert customers from reality towards fantasy and sometimes become hazardous to society (Riquelme et al., 2016; Mainardes et al., 2023). The earlier study conducted a qualitative study that explored the determinants of the deception that affects consumers; it was further suggested that the quantitative analysis for future research would be helpful as a generalizability of the earlier study (Gillespie et al., 2016; Mainardes et al., 2023). Previous studies conducted in this context suggested that the effect of advertising scepticism on the consumer's attitude towards the brand and their reaction according to the advertisement believability must be thoroughly studied and found out (Raziq et al., 2018; Rao, 2022). A few studies in the past have taken into consideration the impact of deceptive advertisements on consumer behaviour in the field of FMCG products.

However, none have particularly conducted their research on personal care products. Hence, this research considers and tends to investigate the authenticity of advertising on different product categories and considers the degree of credibility of the advertisement messages delivered through mediums other than the TV channels (Becker et al., 2019; Mainardes, et al., 2023). As reviewed and analysed from the past literature, it is found that a minimal amount of conceptual and empirical research has been conducted in the areas

of deceptive advertisements and their impact on consumer behaviour, thus leaving the issues related to deception and marketing ethics under a question mark. In Pakistan, a significant research gap exists in studying unethical marketing practices particularly in the industry of personal care products. This research is focused on filling the gap in research literature through a different research methodology.

## **Objectives**

This research examines and describes the effects of misleading claims appearing online and offline. It also explains how personal care product advertisements create deception and how they impact the consumer's behaviour. The objectives of the study are as follows:

- To find out if product satisfaction can be negatively impacted by perceived deception.
- To find out if the retailer satisfaction can be negatively impacted by the perceived deception.
- To find out if retailer satisfaction can have a positive impact on product satisfaction.
- To find out if word of mouth can have a positive impact on retailer satisfaction.
- To find out if consumer loyalty can have a positive impact on retailer satisfaction.
- To examine the relationship between perceived deception and retailer satisfaction with the mediating effect of product satisfaction.
- To examine the relationship between perceived deception and word of mouth with the mediating effect of retailer satisfaction.
- To examine the relationship between perceived deception and consumer loyalty with the mediating effect of retailer satisfaction.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

According to an earlier study, if the perception is closer to reality, consumers feel less deceived by the advertiser or company. When there is a higher difference between perception and reality, consumer-perceived deception is activated (Gillespie et al., 2016). In the marketplace, the deception tactics are not new for the society. Such acts taught people how to handle this deception. When marketers deliberately miscommunicate to consumers with this belief that consumers believe to be false (Chelliah & Swamy, 2018). Deceptive advertisements are the strong players in the change of consumer behaviour because these advertisements overestimate the benefits of

the products to capture the consumer's attention. In the short period company's profit is increased, but in the long term is damaged the brand image. The inaccurate perception is that the facts given through the advertisement of the business are to stimulate the perceptual process of the individual, but the results of the perceptual process are different as compared to reality (Gillespie et al., 2016). Advertising is called misleading, which tends to develop false expectations if an advertiser fails to give evidence regarding the products that will surely satisfy or details the details represented in advertising (Liepinyte & Daugeliene, 2012).

## **Perceived Deception**

The alteration and inaccurate information provided by the deceiver is called fraud as this is used to take some financial benefits. The internet is the powerful tool that provides the ground of deception because this is free or unregulated communication media. Deceptive advertising activities influence tectrices to sell a product that is harmful to consumers as well as society (Rao, 2022). The inaccurate perception is developed through deception such as one past study mentioned, fool me one time, this is humiliating for the company; fool me the second time, this is humiliating for me. Most of retailers are tempted to follow unethical and deceptive selling practices, due to the absence of powerful regulations and their enforceability (Gomes & Frade, 2019; Mainardes et al., 2023). The perceived deception is since the consumer identifies the misleading claim in advertisements that is part of deceptive marketing practices and claims which creates consumer scepticism. Perceived deception is the next stage of inaccurate perception that occurs after the product is purchased due to inaccurate information received from the advertiser and when there is a discrepancy between information provided and product received (Chaouachi & Rached, 2012). The alteration and inaccurate information that provided by deceiver that is called fraud as this used to take some financial benefits. The internet is a powerful tool that provides the ground for deception because this is free or unregulated communication media (Garrett et al., 2019). An advertisement is said to be deceptive if it develops a false or incorrect belief and expectation related to the product and expectations are as judgment of consumers. If the difference is small between expectation and experience, but after purchase wonders consumers feel more negatively (Wilkins et al., 2016).

## Perceived Deception & Product Satisfaction

The earlier studies related to behavioural research recommended that consumers are highly vulnerable to deceptive advertising when they are incapable of finding dishonest features in an advertisement. It would further lead to convey negative word of mouth or perceived deception due to these reasons consumers are highly dissatisfied (Xie et al., 2015). The consumer's expectations are developed based on information displayed on web advertisements. Most of the online retailers that are doing deceptive marketing techniques create unrealistic expectations for the product. Of these unethical practices' dissatisfaction occurs due to a mismatch between expectation and product performance (Farooq & Maqbool, 2024). All above evidence leads the study to suggest that:

H<sub>1</sub>: Perceived deception has a negative impact on Consumer Satisfaction with the product

## Product Satisfaction & Retailer Satisfaction

The retailer can develop reliable relationships with consumers through honest dealing or transactions. The retailer must form strategies to maintain a positive image or position in the consumer's mind. Other studies which are related to online buying and selling have evaluated the relationship among the consumer behaviour associated to online retailer ethics and satisfaction. Moreover, prior studies have implied that retail transactions and codes of conduct strongly influence consumer satisfaction (Elbeltagi & Agag, 2016). Today's consumer gets information from multiple selection criteria such as rating system, buyer's recommendation about the seller, and (Word of Mouth) WoM, indicating consumer's satisfaction with a retailer. Today's consumer gets information from multiple selection criteria such as rating system, buyer's recommendation about the seller, and WoM, indicating consumer's satisfaction with a retailer (Huang & Liu, 2022). Thus, the current study formally proposes the following relationship.

H<sub>2</sub>: Consumer's satisfaction with the product has a positive impact on Consumer's satisfaction with the retailer

## Perceived Deception & Retailer Satisfaction

The earlier studies indicate that if the consumer has not felt perceived deception or perceived ethical behaviour of a retailer, that plays a crucial role in the purchaser and seller relationship as it positively influences satisfaction, belief, and commitment to retailer (Gillespie et al., 2016; Lu et al., 2022). Consumer perceives the retailer, that he or she provides misleading

information related to the product, and the consumer reacts according to their perception, irrespective of whether the retailer is deceiving. This is an important point for retailers that they should recognize the concept of perceived deception and in what way retailers can reduce its results (Munir & Mohan, 2022). Based on this learning, the current study suggests the following relationship.

H<sub>3</sub>: Perceived deception has a negative impact on consumer satisfaction with retailers

## Retailer Satisfaction & Word of Mouth

Whenever consumers get satisfaction with a particular retailer, he or she would like to share his or her positive feelings with other consumers which is called word of mouth (Riquelme et al., 2016). Word of mouth and repurchase intentions are two extensively observed items of consumer behaviour. The negative online word of mouth indicates consumer dissatisfaction. Conversely, repurchase intention results from satisfaction with the retailer and creates positive word of mouth (Rao, 2022). It is a form of informal communication with other consumers about the ownership, characteristics, or features of a certain product/ service. This is what makes word of mouth different from the traditional form of marketing usually initiated by marketers or merchants and hence, word of mouth may not always necessarily be positive (Yen & Tang, 2019). According to the above-cited studies, it is sensible to claim the following relationship.

H<sub>4</sub>: Retailer satisfaction has a positive impact on word of mouth

## Retailer Satisfaction & Consumer Loyalty

Some researchers suggest that if the service provider can improve consumer satisfaction and loyalty through the effective and efficient quality of services satisfaction is associated with loyalty, and loyalty is the result of the service performance of the retailer (El Moussaoui et al., 2023). On the other hand, attitudinal loyalty refers to the commitment made by the consumer in the purchase act with the brand, including the actions to purchase and recommend a particular brand without considering the actual repeated purchase behaviour into account (Su & Chang, 2018). Companies can benefit from customer loyalty as loyal customers tend to (1) purchase more frequently, (2) purchase new goods and services, (3) suggest the goods and services further consumers in case of product satisfaction, and (4) give honest and sincere feedback/ suggestions to the companies (El Moussaoui et al., 2023). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H<sub>5</sub>: Retailer satisfaction has a positive impact on consumer loyalty

### **Perceived Deception & Retailer Satisfaction with Mediating Effect of Product Satisfaction**

Product satisfaction is derived from the absence of deception. The customer is satisfied with a particular product when its performance meets expectations because it contains no misleading, exaggerated, or deceptive information in the advertisement. If the information is accurate and the service meets the expectations, the downstream will impact consumer satisfaction. The most important problem of online retailing is deception where the consumers perceive the retailer as using unethical marketing tactics to attract them to buy from this website (Riquelme et al., 2016). Deception happens when website retailers use misleading images or exaggerate the benefits of products on the other hand, if consumers have reasonable knowledge about the product, they feel less deceptive than consumers who do not know the product. The previous study shows that consumer satisfaction refers to satisfaction with online retailers (Lin et al., 2023). In line with the above studies, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H<sub>6</sub>: Consumer's satisfaction with the product mediates the relationship between perceived deception and consumer's satisfaction with the retailer

### **Perceived Deception & Word of Mouth with Mediating Effect on Retailer Satisfaction**

The perceived deception indirectly affects word of mouth, which is stronger on offline or old shopping modes. Various tactics are used in old shopping channels, such as television commercials, product labelling information, and frontline personnel. If a consumer feels deceptive, the perceived deception has influence on customer's word of mouth and satisfaction with the retailer leading to the consumer's behaviour intention (Riquelme et al., 2016). In simple words, Word of mouth is referred to as the behaviour of the exchange of information about products on different forums such as in online environments or with the help of technologies such as mobile phones (Chu & Kim, 2020). Word of mouth has numerous advantages, ranging from lower costs to faster propagation. Word of mouth can also be described as oral communication

between people involving a perceived non-commercial communicator and a receiver concerning whatever is offered for sale. It is a form of informal communication with the other consumers about the ownership, which differentiates word of mouth from the traditional form of marketing usually initiated by marketers or merchants (Yen & Tang, 2019). Based on this learning, the current study suggests the following relationship.

H<sub>7</sub>: Consumer satisfaction with the retailer mediates the relationship between perceived deception and word of mouth

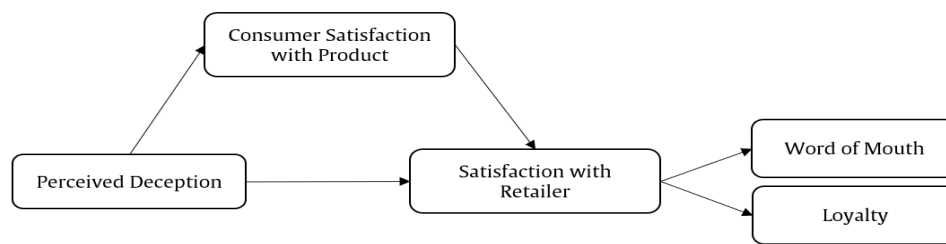
### **Perceived Deception & Consumer Loyalty with Mediating Effect of Retailer Satisfaction**

If the retailer is successful in developing a good image in the minds of consumers through the honesty and responsibility of the retailer or also because of the company behind the website. If the consumer feels secure, confidential, and truthful and the retailer is honest in dealing, it is the success of the retailer and business. The retailer's satisfaction and consumer loyalty influence business profitability (Zhu et al., 2022). Loyalty is described by consumers' positive attitudes toward a product and is shown by their spending. The attitudinal component of loyalty is measured by attitude scale and future intentions. These two measurements of loyalty toward the brand are conducted in a particular study and have transferred into loyalty with the retailer (Lin et al., 2023). Based on the above studies, therefore the following hypothesis is proposed.

H<sub>8</sub>: Consumer satisfaction with retailers mediates the relationship between perceived deception and consumer loyalty

### **Conceptual Framework**

The following conceptual framework consists of dependent, independent, and mediating variables extracted from earlier studies (Gillespie et al., 2016; Hong & Cho, 2011; Riquelme et al., 2016; Sivathanu et al., 2023). In this research, perceived deception is the independent variable, and the dependent variable is the consumer's word of mouth and loyalty. Mediating variables are customer satisfaction with products and customer satisfaction with retailers.



**Fig. 1.** Conceptual Framework

## METHODOLOGY

### Data and Sample

The study was conducted using convenient sampling, part of the non-probability sampling method. Through convenience sampling, primary data was collected with minimum time and resources to ensure the sample represented the whole population. In this view, the sample size suggested for this study was 384, which was the standard for sample estimation (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). The population of the current research was the employees in different organizations, university students, and housewives. The tool for the data collection questionnaire was administered to a sample of 384 real consumers of personal care products. The targeted population of this study was all online and offline users 20 to more than 50 years of age. The sample has reasonable variability

according to gender, age, education, qualification, and occupation. Moreover, online and offline samples are significantly diverse. Approximately 43% were male, and 33.5 were female, of a total sample of 384. About 62% of respondents aged 20-30, 30-40 were 27%, and 8% between 40-50 years. The respondents' profiles also show that 30% preferred online shopping, and 70% preferred offline shopping. The sample profiles or demographics are mentioned in Table 1.

### Analytical Technique

To understand the sample structure or profiles of respondents of the current study, first applied SPSS version 24 for analysis of descriptive statistics (Cheng et al., 2010). Subsequently, it has also been evaluated the properties of measurement scales by smart PLS version 3.0 and applied tests of confirmatory factor analysis, validity, reliability of the constructs, and hypotheses by structural equational modelling.

**Table 1**  
Profiles of Respondent

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	167	43%
Female	217	53%
<b>Age</b>		
20-30	239	62%
30-40	105	27%
40-50	33	8%
> 50	4	2%
<b>Education</b>		
Graduate	168	43%
Postgraduate	100	26%
MPhil	60	15%
Doctorate	16	4%
Other	40	12%
<b>Occupation</b>		
Employed People	128	33%
Self-employed	72	18%
Student	156	40%
Other	28	9%
<b>Online Experience</b>		
< 2	152	39%
2-5	113	29%
5-8	10	3%
>8	11	3%
None	98	26%
<b>Preference of Shopping Mode</b>		
Online	115	30%
Offline	269	70%

## Questionnaire Design and Measurement

The self-administered questionnaire was adopted and used for primary data collection. It was developed on seven-point Likert scales and consisted of two parts. The First part consists of five constructs, out of which four variables such as product satisfaction, satisfaction with retailer, word of mouth, and loyalty, each have 4 items or indicators, excluding one variable, deceptive advertisement, which has 7 indicators. After the factor analysis, two items were deleted due to low factor loading. The multi-item scale is adapted from earlier studies and, according to the context of this study, is applied to evaluate the constructs. The above Table 2 summarizes the sources and shows the reliabilities

of the constructs and as consistent according to previous studies. The content validity was confirmed by an academic and industry expert and then slightly changed in the survey instrument as suggested by an academic, industry expert, and two real consumers of personal care products. It is therefore confirmed that all questions are relevant and easily understood by the respondents. At the initial stage of data collection, a pilot study was conducted with 30 respondents to confirm questions of the scales could be understood by respondents, and then data was collected as per sample size 384. Finally, primary data was measured on a 7-point Likert Scale ranging from 1 = least agreement to 7 = highest agreement.

**Table 2**  
Summary of Measurement Scales

Measures	Authors	No of Items	Reliability
Perceived Deception	(Chaouachi & Rached, 2012; Riquelme et al., 2016; Riquelme & Román, 2014; Neama et al., 2024)	5	0.789
Satisfaction with Product	(Riquelme et al., 2016; Mainardes et al., 2023)	4	0.890
Satisfaction with Retailer	(Riquelme et al., 2016; Troiville, 2024)	4	0.825
Word of Mouth	(Riquelme et al., 2016; Troiville, 2024)	4	0.846
Consumer Loyalty	(Ocass & Carlson, 2012)	4	0.878

## Data Analysis

According to the objective of the current study and proposed model, the data analysis is done by applying smart PLS with several statistical techniques such as CFA confirmatory factor analysis, Q square, R square, validity and reliability of data such as internal consistency, indicator reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity (Lim, 2024; Hair et al., 2021).

## Adequate Sample Size

The KMO & Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity measures the sampling appropriateness or size of data, which is suggested to check the case of construct ratio for the investigation being conducted. Most of the business and academic and business researches are used KMO & Bartlett’s due to its importance related to find out adequate sample size. The threshold criteria of KMO between 0-1, and values closer to 1 are better.

## Reliability Testing

The measurement of outer model comprises the reliability and validity of the data. The internal consistency of construct measures by reliability, while validity is related to the assessing convergent and discriminant validity (Khan et al., 2019; Lim, 2024). The findings indicate the reliability testing and convergent

validity of the constructs and items. The outer loading of most of the indicators are higher than 0.7, except three of them related to the construct perceived deception. Due to meet the threshold criteria of composite reliability and Average Variance Extracted two items PD5 and PD7 were deleted. However, other loadings of perceived deception were not too low and AVE results are good so further items of perceived deception were not removed. Whereas, Cronbach alpha of all constructs was found to be excellent and > 0.7 it means all items were consistent with the Instrument. The composite reliability (Dhillon Goldstein Rho) is more accurate in PLS-SEM. The ranges of composite reliability are 0-1 and closer to 1 or above 0.7 shows internal consistency. Which is also shows in the below Table 4, all constructs have greater than 0.8 composite reliability it meaning the data is highly consistent.

## Predictive Relevance of the Model

The inner model can predict the power of endogenous constructs (Hair et al., 2021). The estimation of the inner model and basic criteria is to investigate the coefficient of determination R Square and cross-validated redundancy Q square. The R square shows the predictive power of the model and how much variance contributed by the independent

construct on the dependent construct. According to Sanchez (2013), R square is classified into three types such as high, moderate and low. The threshold criteria

of R2 is if the value is higher than 0.6 it is good, the moderate value exists between 0.3 to 0.6, but values less than 0.3 it is low.

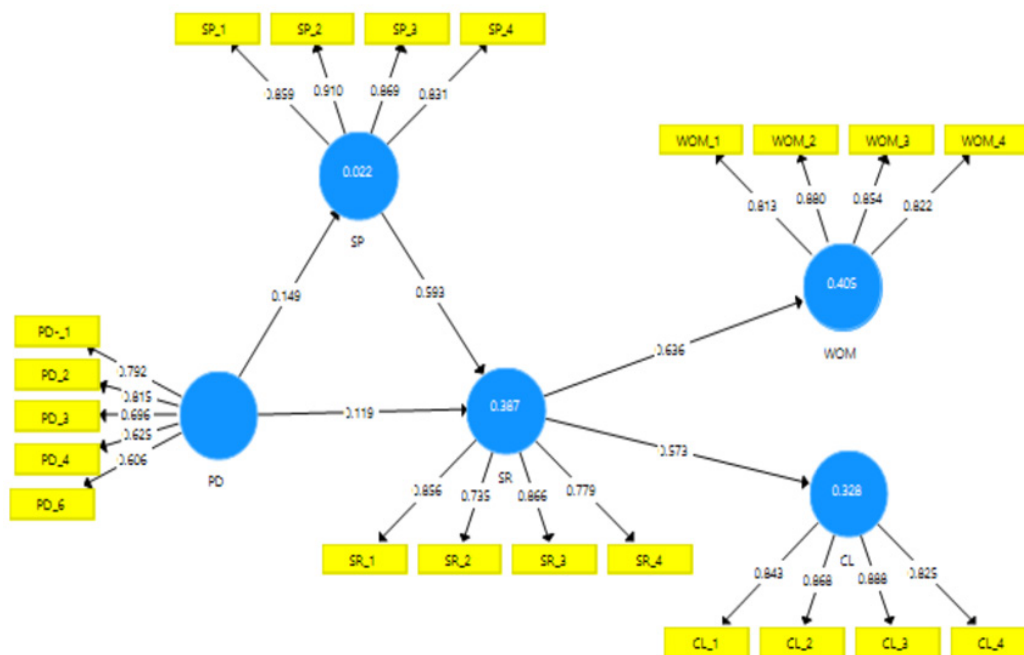
**Table 3**

Predictive Power of the Model

Construct	R Square	Q Square
CL	0.328	0.225
SP	0.022	0.013
SR	0.387	0.238
WOM	0.405	0.269

Above Table 3 shows R square values of the constructs that are CL 0.328, SP 0.022, SR 0.387 and WOM 0.405, in which only WOM has a greater value of 0.405 as compared to other constructs, whereas other CL 0.328 and SR 0.387 have moderate values and only SP 0.022 has low value. It means the model is fit. Hence, the explanatory power of the variables is moderate because the values are in the range 0.3-0.6. Table 3 also

indicates the values of Q square, such as CL 0.225, SP 0.013, SR 0.238, and WOM 0.269 that all are greater than 0 as per threshold criteria, validating the model fitness and significance and the structural model of current research has sufficient predictive authority as it has described. The Q square can predict the inner model's relevancy.



**Fig. 2. Model Fit**

PD: Perceived deception; SP: Satisfaction with the product; WOM: Word of mouth; SR: Satisfaction with the retailer; CL: Consumer Loyalty.

### Magnitude and Significance of Path Coefficients and Hypotheses Testing

The research model of the current study proposes a total of eight hypotheses predicting the dependent variables, which were estimated using structural equation modelling (SEM). The PLS-SEM supports accepting and rejecting hypotheses by bootstrapping

technique is applied to data. Table 4 shows the results of the final analysis of tested hypotheses (Figure 2). The path coefficient shows the power of relations between constructs calculated by the PLS algorithm and bootstrapping, and the P-values validate the significance or not significance of relationships. It is found that all hypotheses are significant and accepted as per statistical criteria. The results mentioned in Table 4, indicate that H1, the relationship between deception and satisfaction ( $\beta=0.149$ ,  $\sigma=0.071$ ,  $t=2.096$ ,

P= 0.036), and H3, the relationship between perceived deception and retailer satisfaction ( $\beta=0.119$ ,  $\sigma =0.048$ ,  $t= 2.488$ ,  $P= 0.013$ ) both hypotheses H1 and H3 have strong negative relationship, have been accepted based on results  $P < 0.05$ . The hypotheses of H2, are

the relationship between product satisfaction and retailer satisfaction ( $\beta=0.593$ ,  $\sigma =0.043$ ,  $t= 13.773$ ,  $P= 0.000$ ). H4, indicating the relationship between retailer satisfaction and word-of-mouth.

**Table 4**  
Path Coefficients & Indirect Effects

Hypotheses Testing	Original Sample	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Value	Decision
H <sub>1</sub> : PD → SP	0.149	0.071	2.096	0.036	Accepted
H <sub>2</sub> : SP → SR	0.593	0.043	13.773	0.000	Accepted
H <sub>3</sub> : PD → SR	0.119	0.048	2.488	0.013	Accepted
H <sub>4</sub> : SR → WOM	0.636	0.043	14.724	0.000	Accepted
H <sub>5</sub> : SR → CL	0.573	0.044	13.003	0.000	Accepted
H <sub>6</sub> : PD → SP → SR (Indirect Effect)	0.88	0.043	2.046	0.041	Accepted
H <sub>7</sub> : PD → SR → WOM (Indirect Effect)	0.132	0.038	3.465	0.001	Accepted
H <sub>8</sub> : PD → SR → CL (Indirect Effect)	0.119	0.036	3.327	0.001	Accepted

H5 shows the relationship between retailer satisfaction and consumer loyalty. Hence, the results of Hypotheses H2, H4, and H5 all have a strong negative relationship, these are accepted on the above results  $P < 0.05$ . The Hypotheses H6, H7, and H8 show the strong mediating effects of product satisfaction and retailer satisfaction. The H6, shows the mediation effect of product satisfaction between the relationship of perceived deception and retailer satisfaction results ( $\beta=0.88$ ,  $\sigma =0.043$ ,  $t= 2.046$ ,  $P= 0.041$ ) are supported by  $P < 0.05$ . The H7, indicates the mediation effect of retailer satisfaction between the relationship of perceived deception and word of mouth ( $\beta=0.132$ ,  $\sigma =0.038$ ,  $t= 3.465$ ,  $P= 0.001$ ) results are supported by  $P < 0.05$ .

The H8, shows the mediation effect of consumer satisfaction between the relationship of perceived deception and consumer loyalty, and results ( $\beta=0.119$ ,  $\sigma =0.036$ ,  $t= 3.327$ ,  $P= 0.001$ ) are accepted based on  $P$  value  $< 0.05$ . Moreover, H6, H7, and H8 show the strong mediating effects of product satisfaction and retailer satisfaction. All statistical results of eight hypotheses are matched according to threshold criteria such as path coefficients  $\beta$  values of all hypotheses H1. H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7, and H8 are  $> 0.1$ , standard deviation  $\sigma$  values of all hypotheses H1. H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7 and H8  $< 1$ , t statistics values of all hypotheses H1. H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7, and H8 are  $> 1.96$ , and finally P values of all hypotheses H1. H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7 and H8 are  $< 0.05$ .

**Discussion**

This research has made a good contribution to

marketing in several ways. For example, the results indicate that the conceptual model was well-fitted and outperformed. Hence, collectively, the results support the existing literature. Furthermore, our findings suggest that either directly or indirectly, the perceived deception leads to the product and retailer satisfaction of the consumer. It also indirectly leads to word of mouth and consumer loyalty. Hence, this relation pattern depends highly upon the retail context. In addition, the current study was focused on deceptive advertisements through online and offline advertisements. Moreover, findings show the negative consequences of perceived deception on consumer satisfaction and word-of-mouth marketing. Therefore, sellers must pay profound regard to any practices that mislead consumers or cause a non-realistic product image in their minds. Also, advertisements and content on the webpage should be carefully constructed with all the relevant information. Honesty should be the priority of any advertisement that makes the perception certain and rectifies customer’s expectations, leading to deception. This integrity means ignoring deceiving sentences such as “special offers and discounts” or showing an offer with its introductory price, which attracts customers when its actual cost differs at the end of the purchase.

The hypothesis on perceived deception hurts consumer satisfaction with the product, can be correct because deceptive advertisements negatively influence consumer satisfaction by creating unrealistic expectations (Elbeltagi & Agag, 2016; Huang & Liu, 2022). The H<sub>2</sub> states the positive impact of consumer

satisfaction with the goods on retailer satisfaction. Indeed, if consumers purchase goods from a particular retailer and are satisfied with product quality, this develops a strong relationship between consumers and retailers. The  $H_3$  on perceived deception is said to have a negative influence on and association with retailer satisfaction (Gillespie et al., 2016; Lu et al., 2022). If the consumer has felt perceived deception or perceived unethical behaviour of the retailer, this plays a negative role in the purchaser-seller relationship as it negatively influences satisfaction and belief about the retailer. The  $H_4$  shows the positive influence of consumer satisfaction with retailers on word of mouth (Riquelme et al., 2016; Rao, 2022). If word of mouth is negative, particularly online, it indicates the dissatisfaction that the consumer had with the product.

The  $H_5$  states that retailer satisfaction has positively influence consumer loyalty. Indeed, if service providers can improve consumer satisfaction and loyalty through effective and efficient service quality, consumers continue or increase the frequency of transactions (El Moussaoui et al., 2023). The  $H_6$  mediates consumer satisfaction with products in the relationship between customer satisfaction with retailers and perceived deception (Riquelme et al., 2016). Correct, because deception will happen when website retailers use misleading images or exaggerate the benefits of products, and if consumers have reasonable knowledge about the product, they feel less deceptive compared to those consumers who do not know the product. The  $H_7$ , consumer satisfaction mediates between perceived deception and word of mouth (Riquelme et al., 2016). It was also found that customer loyalty was positively influenced by customer satisfaction, which helped develop a good image and perception of the product in the mind of the consumer. If the retailer is successful in developing a good perception of the product in the mind of the consumer, the retailer's honesty and responsibility are credited as well as the company's. The  $H_8$  relates to the consumer's satisfaction with the retailer, which mediates the relationship between consumer loyalty and perceived deception. If the consumer feels secure, confidential, and truthful and gains, the retailer is honest in dealing, which is the success of the retailer and business. The retailer's good practices also influence consumer satisfaction and loyalty and have a final effect on business profitability.

## CONCLUSION

The results of the research indicate that the conceptual model was well-fitted and also outperformed. Hence,

collectively the results support the existing literature. Furthermore, our findings indicate that either directly or indirectly, the perceived deception leads to the product and retailer satisfaction of the consumer. It also indirectly leads to word of mouth and consumer loyalty. Hence, this relation pattern depends highly upon the retail context. In addition, the current study was focused on deceptive advertisements by online and offline advertisements.

According to our result findings, and different pattern of relationship was said to be found out between the construct. The results were also seen to be in consistency with the prior evidence found in the previously conducted studies such as perceived deception being said to have a strong influence on product and retailer satisfaction. Product satisfaction had a positive influence on retailer satisfaction which consequently positively influenced word of mouth and consumer loyalty. Previous studies did not include loyalty in their models because of this the current study was included and the model was expanded as suggested in the earlier studies. Hence, the results of the current study are expanded the previous findings and also fill the research gap.

## Managerial Implications

The current study is important and helpful for marketing and strategic brand managers, and several managerial implications are derived from this research. The results show the negative consequences of the perceived deception on consumer satisfaction and the word-of-mouth marketing in the case of both the online and offline retailers. Advertising companies of personal care products to build a strong brand image in consumers, those involved in unethical advertising practices or not, but they can understand through these findings how perceived deception or overpromising damages the satisfaction with product with retailers and negatively influences word of mouth and loyalty. Therefore, based on the results and findings of the current study, the following recommendations are made for the managers should be careful about:

- Design effective training programs to help avoid and identify potential deceptive behaviours and the appropriate responses to these situations
- Design effective compensation programs to reward the employees and help them stay motivated.
- Make sure that the content writers and advertising companies get proper training to provide the product information correctly and honestly

- Stay in communication with other stores and know about the guilty sellers in the stores beforehand to discourage others from doing the same
- Honesty should be the priority of any advertisement that makes the perception certain and rectifies customer's expectations leading to deception

### Competing Interest

The authors had no competing interests.

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