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Deceptive Product Fulfillment, Trust Violation, and Consumer Platform Switching

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ABSTRACT

Purpose—This study investigates how deceptive product fulfillment influences consumer platform switching in digital marketplace platforms. Specifically, it examines the effects of perceived product misrepresentation, perceived information asymmetry, perceived seller opportunism, and marketplace promise breach on switching behavior through post-purchase trust violation.

Design/methodology/approach—This study adopts a quantitative explanatory survey design using a structured questionnaire. Data were analyzed using regression and mediation analyses to examine the direct and indirect relationships among deceptive fulfillment perceptions, post-purchase trust violation, and consumer platform switching.

Findings—The findings show that perceived product misrepresentation, perceived information asymmetry, perceived seller opportunism, and marketplace promise breach increase post-purchase trust violation. Post-purchase trust violation subsequently increases consumer platform switching, confirming its central role in explaining post-purchase behavioral responses. Product misrepresentation and seller opportunism also exert direct effects on switching behavior, whereas information asymmetry and marketplace promise breach operate mainly through trust violation.

Originality/value—This study integrates product deception, post-purchase trust violation, and consumer platform switching into a unified model of e-commerce behavior. It extends post-purchase research beyond satisfaction-based explanations and offers a platform governance perspective on how deceptive fulfillment damages consumer trust and encourages switching behavior.

Implications—The findings suggest that e-commerce platforms should strengthen product verification, seller monitoring, buyer protection, complaint handling, and trust-recovery mechanisms to reduce deceptive fulfillment and prevent consumer migration to alternative platforms.

1. Introduction

E-commerce has transformed shopping by replacing physical inspection with digital cues such as seller descriptions, product photos, reviews, livestreams, ratings, and platform guarantees. In marketplace contexts, buyers often face uncertainty because they cannot physically examine products before purchase and delivery. Online shopping experience, seller signals, trust, social commerce activities, and electronic word-of-mouth play crucial roles in shaping consumer confidence and behavior in digital retail settings (Barari et al., 2020; Kanani and Glavee-Geo, 2021; Leong et al., 2024; Meilatinova, 2021; Pyle et al., 2021; Wongkitrungrueng and Assarut, 2020). This condition is especially relevant in Indonesian e-marketplaces such as Shopee, Tokopedia, and TikTok Shop, where high transaction volumes, diverse sellers, aggressive promotions, and rapid product discovery through social and algorithmic interfaces are common.

A key managerial challenge occurs when the settings the customer receives differ significantly from what was ordered, often summarized as "buying product A but receiving product B." This situation goes beyond a simple delivery mistake because it may indicate product misrepresentation, incorrect fulfillment, deceptive presentation, or seller opportunism. Research on fake reviews, exaggerated online claims, deceptive design, and review manipulation shows that digital marketplaces may present misleading signals to consumers, thereby distorting product expectations and purchase decisions (Román et al., 2023; Salminen et al., 2022; Singh et al., 2025; Song et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2025). When consumers rely on incomplete or asymmetric information, the gap between what is promised and what is delivered can lead to feelings of deception and concerns about platform accountability (Kanani and Glavee-Geo, 2021; Lee and Charles, 2021).

Receiving a product that does not match the description can trigger psychological and behavioral effects after purchase. Negative online experiences often lead to dissatisfaction, regret, reduced trust, complaint behavior, avoidance, and negative word-of-mouth. Consumer regret is particularly important in online shopping because evaluation occurs after payment, delivery, and expectation confirmation, making discrepancies between expected and actual product features emotionally consequential. Such experiences can damage consumer relationships with sellers and platforms, especially when consumers interpret the failure as evidence of poor seller management or insufficient marketplace safeguards (Barari et al., 2020; Barta et al., 2023; Golmohammadi et al., 2020; Khalek et al., 2025; Talwar et al., 2021).

Research in e-commerce has examined various issues, including online trust, service failure, fake reviews, deceptive design, regret, and switching intention. However, limited attention has been paid to the mechanism by which deceptive product fulfillment leads consumers to switch platforms after post-purchase disappointment. Most prior studies focus on pre-purchase trust formation, review credibility, online experience, or recovery after service failure. However, relative safeguards explain how product misrepresentation erodes trust after purchase and encourages consumers to migrate away from the platform (Foroudi et al., 2025; Pyle et al., 2021; Román et al., 2023; Tsai and Tang, 2023). This gap is important because marketplace platforms function not only as transaction intermediaries but also as trust infrastructure entities responsible for seller visibility, product information, consumer protection, and dispute resolution.

This study addresses this gap by developing a comprehensive consumer behavior model that integrates perceived product misrepresentation, perceived information asymmetry, perceived seller opportunism, and marketplace promise breach to explain consumer platform switching in response to post-purchase trust violations. The model synthesizes Psychological Contract Theory, Expectation-Disconfirmation Theory, Attribution Theory, Signaling Theory, and the trust-violation literature to explain why consumers may perceive the receipt of an incorrect product as a breach of the marketplace relationship rather than as a problem attributable solely to the seller. This study advances e-commerce research beyond satisfaction-focused perspectives by emphasizing post-purchase trust violation as the central mediating mechanism. It also provides a clearer explanation of how deceptive fulfillment can drive switching behavior in platform ecosystems (Kanani and Glavee-Geo, 2021; Singh et al., 2025; Tsai and Tang, 2023; Zhang et al., 2021).

The present study makes three main contributions to e-commerce and consumer behavior literature. First, it conceptualizes deceptive product fulfillment as a complex managerial challenge involving product misrepresentation, information asymmetry, seller opportunism, and breach of marketplace promises. Second, it adopts a trust-based perspective by explaining how product mismatch can erode post-purchase trust and influence subsequent platform choice. Third, it emphasizes a platform-governance perspective by highlighting that consumers may hold the marketplace responsible when sellers' behavior threatens transaction fairness and information accuracy. The remainder of this article is structured as follows. Section 2 reviews the literature and formulates the hypotheses. Section 3 explains the research methodology. Section 4 presents the results and discussion. Section 5 concludes the study by presenting theoretical implications, practical implications, limitations, and future research directions.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Foundation

Psychological Contract Theory and Expectation-Disconfirmation Theory support the idea that deceptive product fulfillment constitutes a more serious service failure than a standard transaction problem. In e-marketplace contexts, consumers develop implicit expectations shaped by product descriptions, images, ratings, reviews, seller claims, and platform assurances. When the delivered product does not match the order, these expectations are negatively disconfirmed, leading consumers to perceive a breach of the marketplace's promise of an accurate, reliable, and fair exchange. Previous studies have shown that unfavorable online experiences, deceptive cues, exaggerated claims, and post-purchase regret can erode consumer trust and produce stronger negative responses (Barari et al., 2020; Barta et al., 2023; Román et al., 2023; Singh et al., 2025).

Attribution theory, signaling theory, and trust-violation literature further explain why consumers may not attribute product mismatch solely to individual sellers. As consumers increasingly rely on digital signals to reduce uncertainty, misleading product information, fake reviews, weak governance, and seller-based ambiguity may raise questions about both seller integrity and platform accountability (Kanani and Glavee-Geo, 2021; Pyle et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2025). Once trust is violated, consumers may perceive the platform as failing to regulate seller conduct and protect transaction fairness. As a result, the likelihood of platform-switching intention increases (Foroudi et al., 2025; Tsai and Tang, 2023; Zhang et al., 2021). The following subsections develop the hypotheses based on these theoretical linkages.

2.2 Product Deception and Consumer Platform Switching

Product deception is a critical disruptor of e-marketplace transactions because consumers substantially rely on digital product representations when making purchase decisions. When the received product differs from the ordered item, consumers may perceive the seller's product description, images, variation options, or promotional claims as misleading. Previous studies have shown that deceptive online cues, exaggerated product claims, fake reviews, and manipulated information can distort consumer expectations and erode trust in digital retail environments (Román et al., 2023; Salminen et al., 2022; Singh et al., 2025; Song et al., 2023). In this context, consumers may perceive product representation as unreliable and consider switching to other marketplaces perceived as more reliable and protective.

H1: Perceived product misrepresentation increases consumer platform switching.

Moreover, perceived information asymmetry plays a critical role in platform switching, especially because consumers usually have less product knowledge than sellers before a transaction. In e-marketplaces, buyers must rely on seller-provided descriptions, ratings, reviews, photos, and platform signals to assess product quality and transaction reliability. When these signals are incomplete, unclear, or difficult to verify, consumers may feel that the platform does not sufficiently reduce transaction uncertainty. Prior research highlights the importance of seller- and customer-based signals in reducing uncertainty in social commerce and online marketplace transactions (Kanani and Glavee-Geo, 2021; Pyle et al., 2021). Therefore, higher perceptions of information asymmetry can encourage consumers to switch to platforms perceived as more transparent.

H2: Perceived information asymmetry increases consumer platform switching.

Seller opportunism perception emerges when consumers believe that sellers exploit marketplace visibility, promotional mechanisms, customer trust, or weak monitoring systems to their own benefit. Opportunistic behavior may be inferred when sellers provide vague product information, exaggerate product quality, manipulate reviews, or deliver products that do not match the order. Such perceptions are damaging because they transform product mismatch into a moral and relational judgment about seller integrity. Studies on deceptive design and online review manipulation suggest that consumers become more skeptical when they perceive intentional manipulation in digital transactions (Singh et al., 2025; Zhang et al., 2025). Consequently, perceived seller opportunism may motivate consumers to move away from the affected platform.

H3: Perceptions of seller opportunism increase consumer platform switching.

Marketplace promise breach occurs when consumers feel that the platform has not upheld its implicit guarantee of secure, accurate, and fair transactions. Although the seller directly fulfills the product, the platform provides the infrastructure that oversees product information, seller reputation, payment security, complaints, and dispute resolution. When consumers receive an item that does not match the listing, they may infer a problem with platform governance rather than attributing the issue solely to a single seller. Research on e-service failure, trust repair, and online crisis management indicates that failures in digital exchange can affect future intentions when consumers feel unprotected or when recovery efforts are perceived as inadequate (Foroudi et al., 2025; Zhang et al., 2021). Therefore, such breaches are expected to encourage consumers to seek alternative platforms.

H4: Marketplace promise breach increases consumer platform switching.

2.3 Product Deception and Trust Violation

Product deception can compromise trust in the post-purchase context. This occurs when consumers encounter discrepancies among product information, imagery, variation options, quality assurances, and the actual product they receive. In e-marketplaces, consumers rely on product-quality signals generated by sellers and mediated by the platform. When these signals lead to erroneous fulfillment, consumers may perceive the experience as deceptive, unfair, and inconsistent with the trust embedded in the transaction process. Previous studies have demonstrated that deceptive design, fake reviews, exaggerated online claims, and unreliable product information can erode consumer confidence and intensify negative post-purchase evaluations (Kanani and Glavee-Geo, 2021; Román et al., 2023; Salminen et al., 2022; Singh et al., 2025; Song et al., 2023). Consequently, perceived product misrepresentation and perceived information asymmetry are expected to increase post-purchase trust violation.

Moreover, seller opportunism and marketplace promise breaches may exacerbate post-purchase trust violations because consumers may interpret product discrepancies as deliberate exploitation rather than accidental failures. When sellers appear to manipulate information, exploit promotional visibility, exaggerate product claims, or deliver products that do not match the order, consumers may question both seller integrity and the platform's ability to ensure marketplace fairness. Prior studies show that consumers are sensitive to online retail ethics, promotional credibility, review-based persuasion, live-streaming commerce, and social commerce trust when evaluating digital transactions (Bigné et al., 2020; Lee and Charles, 2021; Lin et al., 2024; Meilatinova, 2021; Wongkitrungrueng and Assarut, 2020). The severity of trust violation increases when consumers believe that the platform has failed to provide adequate protection, maintain accurate information control, or govern seller behavior effectively. Research on online review manipulation, e-service failure, trust repair, and platform governance further indicates that failures in digital transactions can weaken trust and provoke adverse consumer responses (Foroudi et al., 2025; Pyle et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2021, 2025). Consequently, perceptions of seller opportunism and marketplace promise breaches are expected to increase post-purchase trust violations.

H5: Perceived product misrepresentation increases post-purchase trust violation.

H6: Perceived information asymmetry increases post-purchase trust violation.

H7: Seller opportunism perception increases post-purchase trust violation.

H8: Marketplace promise breach increases post-purchase trust violation.

2.4 Trust Violation and Consumer Platform Switching

Post-purchase trust violation can increase consumer platform switching because trust functions as a central evaluative mechanism in digital marketplace transactions. When consumers receive a product that does not match their order, they may no longer view the platform as a reliable environment for product evaluation, seller monitoring, transaction protection, and dispute resolution. Negative online experiences, perceived risk, inadequate recovery mechanisms, and damaged trust can reduce consumers' future intentions and encourage avoidance or switching behavior (Barari et al., 2020; Foroudi et al., 2025; Ma et al., 2025; Tsai and Tang, 2023). Moreover, trust violation can intensify adverse post-purchase responses, such as negative word-of-mouth, complaint behavior, and relational disengagement, particularly when consumers perceive that the platform has failed to protect them from misleading sellers or unreliable product information (Golmohammadi et al., 2020; Khalek et al., 2025; Talwar et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2021). Consequently, consumers whose trust has been violated are more likely to seek alternative platforms perceived as safer, more transparent, and more accountable.

H9: Post-purchase trust violation increases consumer platform switching.

2.5 Trust Violation in Consumer Platform Switching

This study hypothesizes that consumers who experience post-purchase trust violation are more likely to seek alternative platforms. When consumers encounter product misrepresentation or information asymmetry, the consequences include not only dissatisfaction but also a broader perception that the marketplace is unable to provide trustworthy product information, credible seller signals, and sufficient transaction protection. Research indicates that consumers are less likely to trust e-commerce

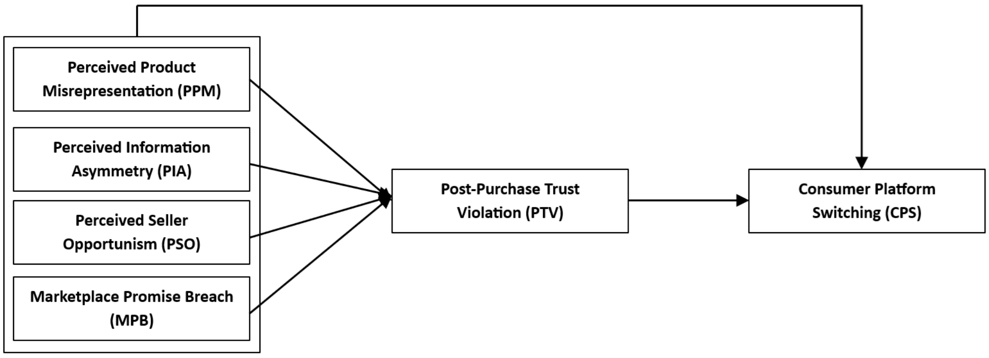

Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework

platforms when they encounter misleading information, fake reviews, deceptive cues, poor information quality, or uncertainty in digital transactions (Kanani and Glavee-Geo, 2021; Meilatinova, 2021; Pyle et al., 2021; Román et al., 2023; Singh et al., 2025). Furthermore, consumers' perceptions of online retailers' ethics and seller credibility influence future behavioral intentions, suggesting that trust damage may influence whether consumers continue using the platform (Lee and Charles, 2021; Wongkitrungrueng and Assarut, 2020). As a result, trust violation is expected to mediate the effects of perceived product misrepresentation and perceived information asymmetry on consumer platform switching.

A comparable process may occur when consumers identify seller opportunism and breaches of marketplace promises. Consumers may perceive the platform as having violated trust beyond an isolated fulfillment issue, particularly when the seller is perceived as manipulating marketplace systems or when the platform is viewed as ineffective in regulating transactions fairly. Research indicates that e-service failure, trust repair, online review manipulation, perceived risk, and switching intention can reduce future intention and encourage consumers to move toward alternative service providers (Golmohammadi et al., 2020; Ma et al., 2025; Tsai and Tang, 2023; Zhang et al., 2021, 2025). Furthermore, unfavorable post-purchase experiences may lead to negative word-of-mouth and relational disengagement, thereby increasing consumers' intention to avoid platforms perceived as unsafe or insufficiently accountable (Khalek et al., 2025; Talwar et al., 2021). As a result, post-purchase trust violation is expected to act as a mediating mechanism between seller opportunism, marketplace promise breach, and consumer platform switching.

H10: Perceived product misrepresentation increases consumer platform switching through post-purchase trust violation.
H11: Perceived information asymmetry increases consumer platform switching through post-purchase trust violation.
H12: Perceptions of seller opportunism increase consumer platform switching through post-purchase trust violation.
H13: Marketplace promise breach increases consumer platform switching through post-purchase trust violation.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework presents consumer platform switching as a response to deceptive product fulfillment in e-marketplaces. Perceived product misrepresentation, perceived information asymmetry, perceived seller opportunism, and marketplace promise breach are positioned as direct antecedents of consumer platform switching and as indirect antecedents through post-purchase trust violation. Post-purchase trust violation is the psychological process by which consumers interpret a product mismatch as a loss of confidence in the seller's integrity, platform governance, and future transaction reliability. As illustrated in Figure 1, the framework integrates product deception, trust violation, and platform switching into a comprehensive model of consumer behavior in digital marketplace transactions.

3. Method

3.1 Research Design

The present study employs a quantitative explanatory approach to analyze how deceptive product fulfillment affects consumer platform switching. A quantitative explanatory design is appropriate because the study aims to test relationships between theoretically derived variables using structured survey data (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). This model is grounded in several theoretical frameworks, including Psychological Contract Theory, Expectation-Disconfirmation Theory, Attribution Theory, Signaling Theory, and trust violation logic. These frameworks explain how product mismatches can be perceived as breaches of transactional expectations, misleading market signals, and violations of consumer trust. Prior e-commerce research has also shown that survey-based investigations are useful for examining negative online experiences, trust issues, regret, and switching behavior (Barta et al., 2023; Foroudi et al., 2025; Tsai and Tang, 2023).

3.2 Population and Sampling

The target population consists of Indonesian consumers who have experienced deceptive product fulfillment in e-marketplaces, especially when the product received differed from what was ordered, described, photographed, or promised in terms of quality. Participants were selected using purposive sampling because the study required respondents with direct post-purchase experience related to product misrepresentation, information asymmetry, seller opportunism, marketplace promise breach, post-purchase trust violation, and switching intention. This approach is consistent with consumer behavior research that examines evaluations based on actual experiences following online service failure, regret, and trust disruption (Barta et al., 2023; Foroudi et al., 2025; Kanani and Glavee-Geo, 2021; Pyle et al., 2021).

Table 1. Measurement Instrument

Variable	Code	Indicators	Source
Perceived Product Misrepresentation	PPM1–PPM5	Product received differed from the one shown in the marketplace listing; Product photos created an inaccurate impression of the actual item; Product description did not accurately reflect the item received; Selected product variation did not match the product received; Seller product information exaggerated the item quality or features.	Román et al. (2023); Salminen et al. (2022); Singh et al. (2025); Song et al. (2023)
Perceived Information Asymmetry	PIA1–PIA5	Seller had more information about the product true condition than buyer; Important product information was unclear before purchase; Buyer relied on limited signals such as photos, ratings, and reviews; Difficult to verify whether seller product claims were accurate; Platform did not sufficiently reduce uncertainty about the product.	Kanani and Glavee-Geo (2021); Pyle et al. (2021)
Perceived Seller Opportunism	PSO1–PSO5	Seller seemed to exploit marketplace information to complete the sale; Seller appeared to benefit from providing unclear product information; Seller focused more on selling than fulfilling the order accurately; Seller used product claims that made the item appear better than reality; Seller behavior made buyer feel exploited as a marketplace consumer.	Román et al. (2023); Singh et al. (2025); Song et al. (2023); Zhang et al. (2025)
Marketplace Promise Breach	MPB1–MPB5	Marketplace failed to ensure product matched the listing; Transaction violated buyer expectation of safe and reliable online shopping; Platform did not provide sufficient protection from misleading sellers; Product mismatch questioned the platform fairness in transactions; Platform failed to meet its implicit promise of seller accountability.	Barari et al. (2020); Foroudi et al. (2025); Lee and Charles (2021); Zhang et al. (2021)
Post-Purchase Trust Violation	PTV1–PTV5	Trust in seller was damaged after receiving the mismatched product; Buyer felt betrayed because product received did not match order; Experience reduced confidence in marketplace product information; Less confident in the platform ability to control dishonest sellers; Product mismatch weakened trust in future marketplace transactions.	Barta et al. (2023); Foroudi et al. (2025); Kanani and Glavee-Geo (2021); Pyle et al. (2021); Tsai and Tang (2023); Zhang et al. (2021, 2025)
Consumer Platform Switching	CPS1–CPS5	Intend to reduce purchases on the platform where mismatch occurred; Will consider using another platform for similar products in future; Likely to switch to a platform with stronger buyer protection; Would avoid buying from the same platform if alternatives available; Experience increased intention to move shopping to another platform.	Barari et al. (2020); Foroudi et al. (2025); Tsai and Tang (2023)

3.3 *Research Instrument*

The research instrument was designed as a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. This scale format is suitable for measuring consumer perceptions, attitudes, and behavioral intentions in business and e-commerce research (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). The instrument was developed based on prior studies in e-commerce, digital retailing, trust, regret, online reviews, and platform switching and was adapted to deceptive product fulfillment in marketplace transactions (Barari et al., 2020; Foroudi et al., 2025; Kanani and Glavee-Geo, 2021; Pyle et al., 2021; Tsai and Tang, 2023). The instrument assesses perceived product misrepresentation, perceived information asymmetry, perceived seller opportunism, marketplace promise breach, post-purchase trust violation, and consumer switching. As shown in Table 1, each construct is measured reflectively through transactions. rs that capture consumers' perceptions of product mismatch, uncertainty about product information, opportunistic seller behavior, marketplace assurance failure, post-purchase trust damage, and intention to switch to alternative platforms.

3.4 *Data Analysis Procedure*

Data analysis was performed using SPSS through a series of steps. Initially, respondent characteristics and research variables were summarized using descriptive statistics to describe the distribution of consumer responses. Next, item validity was assessed using Pearson correlations, while internal consistency was examined using Cronbach's alpha, a standard reliability measure for multi-item scales (Cronbach, 1951; Cronbach and Shavelson, 2004; Salkind, 2012). Classical assumption tests, including normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity, were then conducted to evaluate the suitability of the regression model. Subsequently, multiple regression analysis was used to assess the direct effects of perceived product misrepresentation, perceived information asymmetry, perceived seller opportunism, and marketplace promise breach on consumer platform switching and post-purchase trust violation. Finally, mediation analysis was conducted to examine whether post-purchase trust violation mediates the relationship between deceptive product fulfillment and consumer platform switching, following established mediator-testing procedures (Baron and Kenny, 1986; Harris et al., 2011; Hayes and Preacher, 2006; Preacher and Hayes, 2008).

4. Results

4.1 *Respondent Profile*

Table 2 presents the demographic and shopping-related profile of 420 respondents. The sample was dominated by female consumers (58.10%), while male respondents accounted for 41.90%. Most respondents were aged 21–25 years (37.10%), followed by those aged 26–30 years (21.70%), indicating that the study largely captured young adult consumers who are highly exposed to digital marketplace transactions. In terms of education, bachelor's degree holders represented the largest group (53.80%), while private employees formed the largest occupational category (33.80%), followed by students (26.90%). Regarding marketplace usage, Shopee was the most frequently used platform (47.10%), followed by TikTok Shop (28.10%) and Tokopedia (24.80%). Most respondents reported shopping online 3–5 times per month (39.50%), suggesting regular marketplace engagement. The most affected product category was fashion/apparel (31.40%), followed by small electronics/accessories (19.80%) and beauty/cosmetics (18.80%). The most common mismatch experience was receiving a different item or model (30.00%), followed by lower-than-described product quality (26.70%), different size/color/variation (24.80%), and incomplete or damaged items (18.50%).

Table 3 shows that all composite variables were within the expected 1–5 Likert scale range, with mean values ranging from 2.382 to 2.744. Post-Purchase Trust Violation recorded the highest mean score ($M = 2.744$), indicating that trust-related responses were the most salient among consumers experiencing

Table 2. Respondent Profile

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	176	41.90%
	Female	244	58.10%
Age	17–20 years	74	17.60%
	21–25 years	156	37.10%
	26–30 years	91	21.70%
	31–40 years	68	16.20%
	>40 years	31	7.40%
Education	Senior High School	82	19.50%
	Diploma	54	12.90%
	Bachelor Degree	226	53.80%
	Master/Doctoral Degree	58	13.80%
Occupation	Student	113	26.90%
	Private employee	142	33.80%
	Entrepreneur	61	14.50%
	Civil servant/state employee	42	10.00%
	Freelancer/other	62	14.80%
Main platform used	Shopee	198	47.10%
	Tokopedia	104	24.80%
	TikTok Shop	118	28.10%
Online shopping frequency	1–2 times/month	103	24.50%
	3–5 times/month	166	39.50%
	6–10 times/month	92	21.90%
	>10 times/month	59	14.10%
Product category involved	Fashion/apparel	132	31.40%
	Beauty/cosmetics	79	18.80%
	Small electronics/accessories	83	19.80%
	Household products	66	15.70%
	Others	60	14.30%
Type of mismatch	Different item/model	126	30.00%
	Different size/color/variation	104	24.80%
	Lower quality than described	112	26.70%
	Incomplete/damaged item	78	18.50%

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
PPM	420	1.000	4.000	2.557	0.474	0.139	-0.347
PIA	420	1.000	3.800	2.554	0.435	-0.089	-0.096
PSO	420	1.000	4.000	2.434	0.477	0.160	0.147
MPB	420	1.000	4.000	2.448	0.462	0.139	-0.221
PTV	420	1.200	4.000	2.744	0.469	-0.093	-0.091
CPS	420	1.000	3.800	2.382	0.483	0.060	-0.186

deceptive product fulfillment. Consumer Platform Switching showed the lowest mean ($M = 2.382$), suggesting that switching intention was present but relatively less intense than perceived trust violation. Standard deviations ranged from 0.435 to 0.483, indicating moderate and comparable response dispersion across constructs. The skewness and kurtosis values were all within ±1.5, suggesting no severe deviation from normality and supporting the suitability of the data for subsequent regression-based analysis.
Note. $N = 420$. All variables were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Composite scores were calculated as the mean of five indicators per construct.

4.2 Validity and Reliability Test

The item validity results in Table 4 indicate that all measurement items were valid for their respective constructs. The Pearson correlation coefficients ranged from 0.747 to 0.820 for the indicators of Perceived Product Misrepresentation and Perceived Information Asymmetry, from 0.789 to 0.814 for Perceived Seller Opportunism, and from 0.771 to 0.811 for Marketplace Promise Breach. The mediator and outcome indicators also showed strong item–construct correlations, with Post-Purchase Trust Violation ranging from 0.787 to 0.813 and Consumer Platform Switching ranging from 0.781 to 0.813. These values indicate that each item had an adequate association with its intended construct.

Table 5 presents the reliability results based on Cronbach's alpha. All constructs exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, with alpha values ranging from 0.827 to 0.868. Perceived Product Misrepresentation produced the highest reliability coefficient ($\alpha = 0.868$), followed by Perceived Seller Opportunism and Post-Purchase Trust Violation ($\alpha = 0.864$), Consumer Platform Switching ($\alpha = 0.861$), Marketplace Promise Breach ($\alpha = 0.853$), and Perceived Information Asymmetry ($\alpha = 0.827$). These results confirm that the instrument demonstrates acceptable internal consistency for subsequent analysis.

4.3 Classical Assumption Tests and Correlation Analysis

Table 6 displays the results of the normality test for all composite research variables. The skewness values ranged

Table 4. Item Validity Test Results

Variable	Item	Pearson r	Sig.	Decision
Perceived Product Misrepresentation	PPM1	0.806	< 0.001	Valid
	PPM2	0.820	< 0.001	Valid
	PPM3	0.810	< 0.001	Valid
	PPM4	0.802	< 0.001	Valid
	PPM5	0.810	< 0.001	Valid
Perceived Information Asymmetry	PIA1	0.784	< 0.001	Valid
	PIA2	0.770	< 0.001	Valid
	PIA3	0.778	< 0.001	Valid
	PIA4	0.747	< 0.001	Valid
	PIA5	0.766	< 0.001	Valid
Perceived Seller Opportunism	PSO1	0.803	< 0.001	Valid
	PSO2	0.812	< 0.001	Valid
	PSO3	0.803	< 0.001	Valid
	PSO4	0.789	< 0.001	Valid
	PSO5	0.814	< 0.001	Valid
Marketplace Promise Breach	MPB1	0.792	< 0.001	Valid
	MPB2	0.771	< 0.001	Valid
	MPB3	0.802	< 0.001	Valid
	MPB4	0.789	< 0.001	Valid
	MPB5	0.811	< 0.001	Valid
Post-Purchase Trust Violation	PTV1	0.805	< 0.001	Valid
	PTV2	0.811	< 0.001	Valid
	PTV3	0.809	< 0.001	Valid
	PTV4	0.813	< 0.001	Valid
	PTV5	0.787	< 0.001	Valid
Consumer Platform Switching	CPS1	0.813	< 0.001	Valid
	CPS2	0.799	< 0.001	Valid
	CPS3	0.812	< 0.001	Valid
	CPS4	0.781	< 0.001	Valid
	CPS5	0.802	< 0.001	Valid

Table 5. Reliability Test Results

Variable	Items	Cronbach's α	Threshold	Decision
Perceived Product Misrepresentation	5	0.868	0.700	Reliable
Perceived Information Asymmetry	5	0.827	0.700	Reliable
Perceived Seller Opportunism	5	0.864	0.700	Reliable
Marketplace Promise Breach	5	0.853	0.700	Reliable
Post-Purchase Trust Violation	5	0.864	0.700	Reliable
Consumer Platform Switching	5	0.861	0.700	Reliable

Table 6. Normality Test Results

Variable	N	Skewness	Kurtosis	KSS	K-S Sig.	SWS	S-W Sig.
PPM	420	0.139	−0.357	0.122	< 0.001	0.956	< 0.001
PIA	420	−0.089	−0.109	0.140	< 0.001	0.958	< 0.001
PSO	420	0.160	0.131	0.138	< 0.001	0.960	< 0.001
MPB	420	0.139	−0.233	0.144	< 0.001	0.956	< 0.001
PTV	420	−0.093	−0.105	0.148	< 0.001	0.957	< 0.001
CPS	420	0.060	−0.198	0.121	< 0.001	0.968	< 0.001

from −0.093 to 0.160, and kurtosis values ranged from −0.357 to 0.131. All these values fell within the acceptable range of ±1.5, suggesting that the data are approximately normally distributed. Although the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests were significant for all variables, this is a common occurrence with large samples and does not necessarily imply serious non-normality. Thus, the distributional properties of the data are suitable for regression analysis.

Note. $N = 420$. K-S = Kolmogorov-Smirnov test; S-W = Shapiro-Wilk test. If skewness and kurtosis values fall within ±1.5, the data are considered approximately normally distributed.

Table 7 shows the results of the multicollinearity test for the independent variables predicting consumer platform switching. Tolerance values ranged from 0.683 to 0.823, all comfortably above the 0.10 threshold. VIF values ranged from 1.215 to 1.464, well below the 10.00 limit. These results indicate that perceived product misrepresentation, perceived information asymmetry, perceived seller opportunism, and marketplace promise breach do not suffer from multicollinearity. Therefore, each predictor can be included in the regression model without significant overlap.

Note. Dependent variable: CPS. VIF = Variance Inflation Factor. Multicollinearity is absent when Tolerance > 0.10 and VIF < 10.00.

Table 8 presents the results of the heteroscedasticity test conducted using the Glejser method. The regression of the absolute residuals on perceived product misrepresentation, perceived information asymmetry, perceived seller opportunism, and marketplace promise breach produced an R^2 of 0.013, an F-value of 1.368, and a p-value of 0.244. Since the p-value is above 0.05, the result suggests that heteroscedasticity was not present in the model. Consequently, the residual variance was considered stable across different levels of the independent

Table 7. **Multicollinearity Test Results**

Variable	Tolerance	VIF	Decision
PPM	0.727	1.375	No multicollinearity
PIA	0.823	1.215	No multicollinearity
PSO	0.683	1.464	No multicollinearity
MPB	0.779	1.283	No multicollinearity

Table 8. **Heteroscedasticity Test Results**

Model	R^2	df1	df2	F	Sig.
PPM, PIA, PSO, MPB → CPS	0.013	4	415	1.368	0.244

Table 9. **Pearson Correlation Matrix**

Variable	Mean	SD	PPM	PIA	PSO	MPB	PTV	CPS
PPM	2.557	0.474	1.000	–	–	–	–	–
PIA	2.554	0.435	0.364	1.000	–	–	–	–
PSO	2.434	0.477	0.455	0.338	1.000	–	–	–
MPB	2.448	0.462	0.337	0.256	0.436	1.000	–	–
PTV	2.744	0.469	0.447	0.362	0.432	0.372	1.000	–
CPS	2.382	0.483	0.377	0.306	0.389	0.323	0.457	1.000

Table 10. **Direct Effects on Post-Purchase Trust Violation**

Variable	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Standardized β	t-value	p-value
PPM	0.241	0.047	0.244	5.106	< 0.001
PIA	0.179	0.048	0.166	3.711	< 0.001
PSO	0.191	0.048	0.194	3.939	< 0.001
MPB	0.165	0.047	0.163	3.536	< 0.001

variables.

Note. The Glejser test was applied. Heteroscedasticity is absent when the significance value of the regression between independent variables and absolute residuals exceeds 0.05.

Table 9 displays the Pearson correlation matrix for the six composite variables. All correlations are positive and statistically significant, aligning with the expected relationships. The strongest correlation is between post-purchase trust violation and consumer platform switching ($r = 0.457$), suggesting that trust damage is strongly related to consumers' intention to switch platforms. The weakest correlation is between perceived information asymmetry and marketplace promise breach ($r = 0.256$), although it remains positive. Overall, the correlation pattern offers preliminary empirical support for the proposed model.

Note. $N = 420$. All correlations are significant at $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed). SD = Standard Deviation.

4.4 Multiple Regression Analysis

As illustrated in Table 10, all four predictors significantly increased post-purchase trust violation. The strongest effect on PTV was produced by perceived product misrepresentation ($\beta = 0.244$), followed by perceived seller opportunism ($\beta = 0.194$), perceived information asymmetry ($\beta = 0.166$), and marketplace promise breach ($\beta = 0.163$). These findings support H5–H8 and indicate that consumers are more likely to experience trust violation when product mismatch is perceived as misleading, asymmetric, opportunistic, and incongruent with marketplace commitments. The model explained 31.3% of the variance in post-purchase trust violation ($R^2 = 0.313$), demonstrating sufficient explanatory power for the mediator model.

As shown in Table 11, post-purchase trust violation significantly increased consumer platform switching ($B = 0.280$), thereby supporting H9. The direct effects of perceived product misrepresentation and perceived seller opportunism on CPS remained statistically significant, while perceived information asymmetry and marketplace promise breach became non-significant after PTV was included. All indirect effects were significant because their bootstrap confidence intervals did not include zero. Therefore, PTV partially mediated the effects of PPM and PSO on CPS, whereas PIA and MPB were fully mediated. The CPS model explained 28.5% of the variance in consumer platform switching ($R^2 = 0.285$), indicating that deceptive fulfillment and trust violation jointly explain switching responses.

Table 12 summarizes the hypothesis testing results. Eleven of the thirteen hypotheses were supported, while H2 and H4 were rejected because their direct effects on consumer platform switching were not significant after controlling for post-purchase trust violation. The results show a consistent pattern: all deceptive fulfillment dimensions significantly increased trust violation, and trust violation, in turn, significantly increased platform switching. The significant indirect effects for all four antecedents confirm that post-purchase trust violation plays a central explanatory role in translating deceptive product fulfillment experiences into consumer platform switching.

4.5 Discussion

The findings indicate that perceived product misrepresentation, perceived information asymmetry, perceived seller opportunism, and marketplace promise breach have substantial effects on post-purchase trust violation. This finding suggests that consumers do not perceive deceptive product fulfillment merely as a transactional inconvenience, but rather as a violation of the implicit psychological contract established during online purchasing. When consumers encounter discrepancies between

Table 11. Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects on Consumer Platform Switching

Path	Direct Effect (c')	Indirect Effect ($a \times b$)	Total Effect (c)	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
PPM → PTV → CPS	0.129	0.067	0.197	0.037	0.103
PIA → PTV → CPS	0.099	0.050	0.149	0.021	0.087
PSO → PTV → CPS	0.145	0.053	0.198	0.026	0.087
MPB → PTV → CPS	0.098	0.046	0.144	0.017	0.083
PTV → CPS (H9)	0.280	–	0.280	–	–

Table 12. Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Path	Coefficient	t-value/Bootstrap	p-value/CI	Decision
H1	PPM → CPS	0.127	2.525	0.012	Supported
H2	PIA → CPS	0.089	1.905	0.057	Rejected
H3	PSO → CPS	0.143	2.787	0.006	Supported
H4	MPB → CPS	0.094	1.965	0.0501	Rejected
H5	PPM → PTV	0.244	5.106	< 0.001	Supported
H6	PIA → PTV	0.166	3.711	< 0.001	Supported
H7	PSO → PTV	0.194	3.939	< 0.001	Supported
H8	MPB → PTV	0.163	3.536	< 0.001	Supported
H9	PTV → CPS	0.272	5.425	< 0.001	Supported
H10	PPM → PTV → CPS	0.067	5,000 bootstrap	[0.037, 0.103]	Supported
H11	PIA → PTV → CPS	0.050	5,000 bootstrap	[0.021, 0.087]	Supported
H12	PSO → PTV → CPS	0.053	5,000 bootstrap	[0.026, 0.087]	Supported
H13	MPB → PTV → CPS	0.046	5,000 bootstrap	[0.017, 0.083]	Supported

their expectations and the actual product received, as shaped by product descriptions, photographs, reviews, variations, and platform assurances, they may experience negative disconfirmation and reassess the integrity of the transaction. The significant role of perceived product misrepresentation indicates that inaccurate or misleading product representation is a primary catalyst for trust damage because it directly contradicts consumers' beliefs about the product they intended to purchase. This finding aligns with previous studies indicating that deceptive design, exaggerated or fabricated online reviews, and manipulated product information can erode consumer confidence and disrupt decision-making in digital marketplaces (Román et al., 2023; Salminen et al., 2022; Singh et al., 2025; Song et al., 2023).

The study also shows that perceived product misrepresentation and perceived seller opportunism remain key factors driving consumers to switch platforms. In contrast, perceived information asymmetry and marketplace promise breach do not directly lead to switching after post-purchase trust violation is considered. This can be explained through Attribution Theory, which suggests that consumers tend to blame tangible and observable issues, such as the product received or the seller's behavior, rather than abstract structural conditions such as information asymmetry or implicit platform promises. Product mismatch and opportunistic seller behavior are more observable and relatable, making them more immediate triggers of avoidance and switching. On the other hand, perceptions of information asymmetry and marketplace promise breach may require a trust-related interpretation before leading to switching intention. This aligns with prior research showing that negative online experiences, e-service failures, poor recovery mechanisms, and switching-related motivations can reduce future engagement and encourage consumers to explore alternative platforms (Barari et al., 2020; Foroudi et al., 2025; Tsai and Tang, 2023).

In the proposed model, post-purchase trust violation serves as a central mediating mechanism. The full mediation found for perceived information asymmetry and marketplace promise breach indicates that these two antecedents primarily influence platform switching when consumers experience a breakdown of trust. In other words, unclear product information or perceived failure of marketplace assurance does not automatically lead consumers to leave the platform unless it is interpreted as undermining the reliability of the platform relationship. Conversely, the partial mediation observed for perceived product misrepresentation and perceived seller opportunism suggests that these factors function through both direct and indirect pathways. Consumers may switch platforms because the product itself was misrepresented or because the seller appeared opportunistic, while a violation of trust further strengthens this behavioral response. This finding is consistent with online trust literature, which emphasizes that trust is particularly fragile in digital environments and that trust repair becomes critical when consumers perceive unfairness, manipulation, or platform-level failure (Pyle et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2021).

The present study contributes theoretically to e-commerce and consumer behavior literature by integrating product deception, post-purchase trust violation, and consumer platform switching into a unified explanatory framework. Prior studies have examined online trust, fake reviews, service failure, customer experience, and switching intention, but these streams of research have often remained fragmented. The present model clarifies that deceptive product fulfillment is not only a product-level problem but also a trust infrastructure problem. From the perspective of signaling theory, e-marketplaces reduce uncertainty by providing product descriptions, reviews, ratings, seller reputation, visual content, and platform guarantees. When these signals fail or become misleading, consumers may question not only the seller but also the marketplace system that allowed such signals to operate. This extends earlier studies on seller-customer signals, online trust, social commerce, and eWOM credibility by showing how signal failure can move consumers from post-purchase disappointment to platform-level behavioral change (Kanani and Glavee-Geo, 2021; Meilatinova, 2021; Pyle et al., 2021; Wongkitrungrueng and Assarut, 2020).

The findings also suggest that e-commerce platforms should treat deceptive fulfillment as a governance and trust-management issue rather than a routine complaint category. Platforms should implement stronger verification mechanisms for product images, titles, descriptions, variations, and seller claims, particularly in categories where complaints about product mismatches are prevalent. In addition, seller accountability should be enhanced through stricter monitoring procedures, transparent complaint histories, stronger penalties for repeated misrepresentation, and faster buyer protection mechanisms. Trust recovery is equally important. When consumers experience product mismatches, platforms should offer clear dispute resolution, transparent refund procedures, and visible corrective actions against opportunistic sellers. Prior research on e-service failure, recovery strategies, and online review manipulation supports the view that platform governance and credible recovery mechanisms are essential for maintaining future consumer intention (Foroudi et al., 2025; Zhang et al., 2025).

Several limitations should be acknowledged. This study relies on cross-sectional, self-reported consumer data, which limits causal inference and may be affected by subjective recall of deceptive product fulfillment experiences. Future research should employ longitudinal, experimental, or cross-country approaches to examine how trust violations evolve over time and how different digital platform governance strategies influence switching behavior. Additional research could compare product categories or examine how deceptive practices, such as fake reviews and visual distortion, together with perceived risk and the effectiveness of seller verification, influence post-purchase regret, negative word-of-mouth, and trust restoration needs (Barta et al., 2023; Khalek et al., 2025; Ma et al., 2025; Salminen et al., 2022).

5. Conclusion

This study concludes that deceptive product fulfillment increases consumer distrust and platform switching in digital marketplaces. Perceived product misrepresentation, information asymmetry, seller opportunism, and marketplace promise breach significantly increase post-purchase trust violation. Trust violation then encourages consumers to switch to alternative platforms. Product misrepresentation and seller opportunism have both direct and indirect effects on switching, whereas information asymmetry and marketplace promise breach operate primarily through trust violations. These findings confirm that platform switching is a trust-based response to perceived deception in e-commerce transactions.

Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to the e-commerce and consumer behavior literature by integrating product deception, post-purchase trust violation, and platform switching into a single explanatory model. The findings extend Psychological Contract Theory and Expectation-Disconfirmation Theory by showing that product mismatch is perceived as a violation of implicit transaction promises. The study also supports attribution theory by showing that visible failures, such as product misrepresentation and seller opportunism, trigger stronger switching responses. In addition, the study advances signaling theory by showing that misleading product information and weak marketplace assurance damage consumer trust.

Practical Implications

The findings suggest that e-commerce platforms should treat deceptive fulfillment as a governance and trust-management issue. Platforms should strengthen product verification, improve the accuracy of photos and descriptions, monitor seller behavior, and provide stronger buyer protection. Sellers should avoid exaggerated claims, ambiguous descriptions, and misleading product variations. Marketplace operators also need faster complaint handling, transparent refund procedures, and clear sanctions for repeated seller misconduct.

Research Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, the cross-sectional design limits causal interpretation. Second, the use of self-reported data may involve recall bias and subjective interpretation. Third, the study focuses only on consumers who experienced deceptive fulfillment, so the findings may not represent consumers with neutral or positive marketplace experiences. Fourth, the study does not compare specific platforms, product categories, or seller types in detail.

Future Research Directions

Future studies may use longitudinal or experimental designs to examine how trust violation develops over time. Comparative studies across platforms, countries, and product categories could provide broader evidence. Future research may also examine buyer protection awareness, prior platform loyalty, refund experience, perceived risk, platform accountability, and trust-recovery effectiveness as moderating variables.

Declarations

The authors declare no conflict of interest. This research received no external funding. The data are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. All respondents participated voluntarily, and their information was treated confidentially.

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