

Online Customer Reviews and Repurchase Intentions: Customer Satisfaction Mediation in Makassar Fast Food Consumers

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Abstract

Purpose: This study examines the effect of Online Customer Reviews (OCRs) on repurchase intention and the mediating role of customer satisfaction among fast-food consumers in Makassar.

Research Methodology: A quantitative, explanatory, and single cross-sectional survey was conducted involving 110 respondents selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling with SmartPLS. The analysis assessed the measurement model, structural model, direct effects, and the specific indirect effect.

Results: OCRs had positive and significant effects on repurchase intention ($\beta=0.459$, $p<0.001$) and customer satisfaction ($\beta=0.548$, $p<0.001$). Customer satisfaction also positively influenced repurchase intention ($\beta=0.480$, $p<0.001$). The indirect effect of OCRs on repurchase intention through customer satisfaction was significant ($\beta=0.263$, $p<0.001$), indicating complementary partial mediation. Customer satisfaction accounted for 36.43% of the total effect, while OCRs and customer satisfaction jointly explained 68.2% of the variance in repurchase intention.

Conclusions: Credible and relevant OCRs strengthen repurchase intention both directly and indirectly by shaping customer satisfaction. Repeat purchasing therefore depends on the consistency between expectations formed through digital reviews and the actual food and service experience.

Limitations: The study was limited to fast-food consumers in Makassar and employed purposive sampling and a cross-sectional design, restricting broader generalization and causal inference.

Contributions: The study integrates e-WOM theory, Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory, and the Stimulus-Organism-Response model to explain how online reviews influence repurchase intention through customer satisfaction, while providing practical insights for review management and service improvement.

Keywords: Customer Satisfaction, Electronic Word of Mouth, Fast-Food Industry, Online Customer Reviews, Repurchase Intention, Stimulus-Organism-Response Model

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1. Introduction

The fast-food industry in Indonesia has experienced substantial growth, reflected in an annual increase in fast-food outlets of approximately 10%. This expansion accompanies lifestyle changes and increasing demand for convenient, quick, and modern food consumption. Indonesians consume fast food at least once a week, indicating that fast-food restaurants have become part of contemporary consumption behavior ([Imelia et al., 2024](#), [Widaningrum et al., 2020](#)). This growth has intensified competition, requiring firms to maintain quality while strengthening digital marketing and managing online consumer interactions.

Digital technology has transformed how consumers search for and evaluate information before making purchase decisions. Online customer reviews (OCRs) have consequently become influential because they contain consumer-generated evaluations, experiences, and opinions shared through social media, e-commerce platforms, review sites, and company websites ([Ahn and Lee, 2024](#), [Fernandes et al., 2022](#), [Zhang et al., 2014](#)). OCRs serve as informational references and social cues that shape perceptions of product quality, service performance, and brand credibility ([Tran et al., 2022](#), [Utz et al., 2012](#)). In digital marketing, OCRs are commonly viewed as electronic word of mouth (e-WOM), differing from traditional promotion because they are interactive, rapidly disseminated, and often considered more authentic because they reflect actual consumer experiences ([Ismagilova et al., 2020](#), [Zhao et al., 2020](#)).

OCRs are particularly relevant in the food and beverage industry because consumers cannot fully assess taste, hygiene, service responsiveness, price fairness, and the dining experience before consumption. Prospective customers therefore rely on others' experiences to reduce uncertainty and evaluate whether a restaurant will meet their expectations. Previous studies show that online reviews influence perceptions, trust, loyalty, purchase decisions, and repurchase intentions ([Casaló et al., 2015](#), [Chang et al., 2013](#), [Sahranavard et al., 2024](#), [Yunus et al., 2021](#)). OCRs may thus encourage favorable responses by providing credible information, reducing perceived risk, and strengthening confidence in a brand or service provider.

However, the literature does not yet clearly explain how OCRs are translated into repurchase intention. OCRs operate as external informational cues encountered before or during decision-making, whereas repurchase intention is a post-consumption response developed after consumers evaluate actual experiences. A direct relationship may therefore overlook how review-based expectations are compared with subsequently experienced product and service performance. Although prior studies identify relationships among online reviews, trust, satisfaction, loyalty, and repurchase intention, these variables are often examined as separate outcomes or direct predictors. The mechanism linking review exposure to willingness to purchase again consequently remains insufficiently understood.

Customer satisfaction may explain this relationship. Understanding this process is important because positive digital information alone cannot guarantee repeat purchases when the restaurant's actual performance fails to consistently satisfy consumers' expectations fully. It reflects consumers' overall evaluation of whether product or service performance meets or exceeds prior expectations ([Falk et al., 2010](#), [Lee et al., 2016](#), [Qazi et al., 2017](#)). OCRs can shape initial expectations regarding food quality, service reliability, price fairness, and the consumption experience. When performance confirms these expectations, customers are more likely to feel satisfied, develop favorable attitudes, and intend to repurchase. Conversely, when performance does not match review-based expectations, favorable OCRs may not lead to repeat patronage. Satisfied consumers are more likely to repurchase and maintain long-term relationships with service providers ([Ahmed et al., 2022](#), [Wang et al., 2023](#)). Customer satisfaction may therefore function as both an antecedent of repurchase intention and a mechanism transmitting the influence of OCRs to subsequent behavioral intentions.

Evidence regarding this mediating process remains limited and fragmented, especially in the fast-food industry. Previous research has mainly examined the direct effects of OCRs on purchase decisions, trust, loyalty, or behavioral intentions, while giving less attention to customer satisfaction as an intervening mechanism ([Noh et al., 2023](#), [Roozen and Raedts, 2018](#)). Findings from e-commerce, hospitality, tourism, or general service settings may not directly apply to fast-food consumption. Fast-

food products involve relatively low purchase involvement, frequent consumption, standardized offerings, short decision processes, and intense brand competition. Favorable online information may encourage trial, but continued patronage likely depends on whether the actual experience creates satisfaction. Examining only the direct OCR-repurchase intention relationship may therefore provide an incomplete explanation of fast-food consumer behavior sector ([Babić Rosario et al., 2020](#), [Camilleri and Filieri, 2023](#)).

A further limitation concerns the geographical concentration of previous studies. Research on OCRs and post-purchase behavior commonly focuses on national markets, major metropolitan areas, e-commerce, or hospitality, while evidence from developing urban markets in Eastern Indonesia remains limited. Makassar is relevant because its fast-food industry continues to expand alongside urban lifestyle changes, growing demand for quick-service restaurants, wider digital-platform use, and the presence of local, national, and international brands. This environment requires businesses to manage food and service quality, customer experiences, and digital interactions ([Ameen et al., 2021](#), [Kuppelwieser and Klaus, 2021](#)). Makassar's market characteristics may generate responses that differ from those observed in more extensively studied metropolitan or digital-commerce contexts.

Accordingly, this study addresses three interrelated gaps. First, it addresses a theoretical gap by explaining how pre-consumption information obtained from OCRs influences post-consumption repurchase intention. Second, it addresses an empirical gap by testing customer satisfaction as a mediator rather than treating OCRs and satisfaction only as separate direct predictors. Third, it addresses a contextual gap by investigating these relationships among fast-food consumers in Makassar, a growing urban market receiving limited attention in OCR research.

This study therefore examines the effect of online customer reviews on repurchase intention and determines whether customer satisfaction mediates this relationship among fast-food consumers in Makassar. By positioning satisfaction as the mechanism connecting online review information with subsequent purchasing behavior, the study contributes to digital marketing and consumer behavior literature by explaining how OCRs produce post-purchase outcomes. Practically, the findings may help fast-food businesses manage online reviews, align review-generated expectations with service delivery, improve satisfaction, and encourage repeat purchases.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1 Theoretical Integration

This study integrates electronic word-of-mouth theory, Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory, and the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model to explain how online customer reviews (OCRs) influence repurchase intention through customer satisfaction. The framework positions OCRs, satisfaction, and repurchase intention as sequential components of consumers' information processing and post-consumption decision-making.

Electronic word-of-mouth theory explains how consumer-generated information shared through digital platforms shapes other consumers' perceptions, attitudes, and behavioral intentions ([Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004](#)). OCRs function as informational and social cues for assessing product quality, service reliability, and brand credibility. Their influence, however, depends on review valence, volume, credibility, informativeness, and consistency. Positive, credible reviews may reduce perceived risk, whereas inconsistent or less credible reviews may create uncertainty or information overload ([Ahn and Lee, 2024](#), [Fernandes et al., 2022](#), [Zhang et al., 2014](#)).

Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory explains how pre-consumption information develops into post-consumption satisfaction ([Oliver, 1980](#), [Oliver, 1999](#)). OCRs form expectations regarding food quality, service speed, cleanliness, price fairness, convenience, and overall experience. Consumers then compare these expectations with actual performance. Satisfaction occurs when performance meets or exceeds expectations, while dissatisfaction arises when performance falls short.

The S-O-R model connects these mechanisms by proposing that an external stimulus affects an internal cognitive and emotional state, producing a behavioral response ([Hochreiter et al., 2023](#)). Accordingly, OCRs represent the stimulus, customer satisfaction represents the organism, and repurchase intention represents the response. This integration supports both a direct OCR-repurchase intention relationship and an indirect relationship mediated by customer satisfaction. It offers a comprehensive explanation of consumers' repeat-purchase decisions in fast-food markets.

2.2 Online Customer Reviews

Online customer reviews are consumer-generated evaluations of products, services, brands, or consumption experiences that are shared through digital platforms. OCRs constitute a prominent form of electronic word of mouth because they allow consumers to communicate opinions, experiences, ratings, and recommendations to a broad audience beyond their immediate social networks ([Ismagilova et al., 2020](#), [Zhao et al., 2020](#)).

Unlike firm-generated advertising, OCRs originate from consumers who are perceived to have direct experience with the product or service. Consequently, potential consumers may regard OCRs as more independent and authentic than conventional promotional communication. Nevertheless, the persuasive effect of OCRs depends on their informational characteristics. Review credibility indicates the extent to which consumers consider a review trustworthy and reliable, while review quality reflects its relevance, clarity, accuracy, and comprehensiveness. Review valence indicates whether the evaluation is positive or negative, and review volume represents the number of reviews available for a particular product, service, or brand ([Ahn and Lee, 2024](#), [Liu et al., 2023](#), [Soares et al., 2022](#)).

A high volume of consistent reviews may provide social proof and reduce uncertainty because consumers interpret the collective opinions of previous customers as an indication of product popularity and market acceptance. However, review volume does not always generate positive outcomes. Excessive, repetitive, or contradictory information may produce information overload and make evaluations more difficult ([Su and Niu, 2020](#), [Wang et al., 2024](#)). Similarly, positive reviews from verified or reputable reviewers are generally more persuasive than anonymous or unverifiable reviews because source credibility strengthens consumers' confidence in the information provided ([Firjatillah et al., 2025](#), [Sudaryanto et al., 2025](#)).

In the fast-food context, OCRs are particularly important because consumers cannot fully evaluate experiential attributes before consumption. Taste, freshness, cleanliness, employee responsiveness, service speed, and the overall dining experience can only be assessed directly after consumption. Potential consumers therefore rely on the experiences of previous customers as surrogate information for evaluating the likely quality of a fast-food provider. In Indonesia, OCRs have also been associated with consumer trust and repeat purchasing decisions ([Ardianto and Tunjungsari, 2024](#)). From the perspective of eWOM theory, OCRs therefore operate as external informational cues that can shape expectations, evaluations, and subsequent behavioral intentions.

2.3 Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction refers to consumers' cognitive and emotional evaluation of the extent to which a product or service performs in accordance with their prior expectations. Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory conceptualizes satisfaction as the outcome of a comparison between expected and perceived performance ([Oliver, 1980](#), [Oliver, 1999](#)). Positive disconfirmation occurs when actual performance exceeds expectations, confirmation occurs when performance corresponds with expectations, and negative disconfirmation occurs when performance falls below expectations.

Customer satisfaction is therefore not determined exclusively by objective service performance. It also depends on the expectations that consumers develop before consumption. In digital consumption environments, these expectations may be shaped by ratings, comments, photographs, recommendations, and narratives contained in OCRs. Highly favorable reviews may increase consumers' expectations, but they may also increase the risk of dissatisfaction when actual performance does not correspond with the experience portrayed online. Conversely, accurate and informative reviews may produce more realistic

expectations, reduce uncertainty, and facilitate a closer correspondence between expected and actual performance.

Satisfaction includes cognitive evaluations of product quality, service quality, price fairness, and functional value, as well as affective responses such as pleasure, comfort, disappointment, or frustration ([Omo-Obas and Anning-Dorson, 2022](#), [Palací et al., 2019](#)). Recent evidence indicates that perceived performance and expectancy disconfirmation remain important determinants of satisfaction across digital and service settings ([Schiebler et al., 2026](#), [Wu and Mohd Yusof, 2025](#), [Ye et al., 2022](#)).

In the fast-food industry, customer satisfaction is multidimensional because consumers evaluate more than the food itself. Satisfaction may result from the combination of food taste, menu consistency, service speed, employee responsiveness, outlet cleanliness, transaction convenience, price fairness, and the overall consumption experience. Within the S-O-R framework, satisfaction represents the consumer's internal evaluative state resulting from the interaction between externally acquired information and actual service performance. It therefore provides a theoretically meaningful bridge between OCRs and repurchase intention.

2.4 Repurchase Intention

Repurchase intention refers to a consumer's subjective probability or willingness to purchase the same product or service again from the same provider in the future. It reflects a forward-looking behavioral intention resulting from previous consumption experiences and is commonly regarded as an important indicator of customer retention and loyalty ([Oliver, 1999](#)).

Although repurchase intention is related to loyalty, the two concepts are not identical. Repurchase intention represents a consumer's planned future behavior, whereas loyalty may also include commitment, preference, resistance to switching, and repeated actual behavior. A consumer may express an intention to repurchase without having developed strong brand loyalty, particularly in markets characterized by convenience, promotional incentives, and low switching costs ([Lianos and Sloev, 2016](#)).

Repurchase intention is shaped by consumers' cumulative assessments of product performance, service quality, trust, perceived value, satisfaction, and available alternatives. In digital consumption environments, online information also contributes to these assessments by reinforcing or challenging consumers' previous experiences. Digital customer experience and consumer trust have consequently become increasingly relevant to customer retention and competitive advantage ([El Shiffa et al., 2022](#), [Melia, 2023](#), [Miao et al., 2021](#), [Verina and Susanti, 2022](#)).

2.5 Hypotheses Development

2.5.1 Online Customer Reviews and Repurchase Intention

Electronic word-of-mouth theory suggests that consumer-generated information can influence other consumers' attitudes and behavioral intentions because it is perceived as experience-based and relatively independent of commercial persuasion ([Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004](#)). OCRs provide information regarding the quality, consistency, and reliability of a product or service, thereby reducing uncertainty and supporting consumers' evaluations.

Within the S-O-R framework, OCRs function as an external stimulus that can directly influence a behavioral response. Consumers repeatedly encounter reviews before and after purchasing, and favorable reviews may reinforce their existing perceptions of a fast-food provider. Positive and credible reviews can validate consumers' previous choices, strengthen confidence in the provider, and reduce the perceived risk associated with purchasing again. In contrast, negative or inconsistent reviews may create doubts about product consistency and service reliability, even among consumers with previous purchasing experience.

Prior empirical studies have demonstrated that favorable electronic reviews can strengthen behavioral intentions, whereas unfavorable reviews can reduce consumers' willingness to purchase or repurchase

([Cheung and Thadani, 2012](#), [Cung et al., 2023](#), [Haeruddin, 2025](#), [Qiu and Zhang, 2024](#), [Yunus et al., 2021](#), [Zhang et al., 2025](#)). Accordingly, the direct relationship between OCRs and repurchase intention is theoretically supported by eWOM theory and the stimulus-response pathway of the S-O-R model. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₁: Online customer reviews have a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention.

2.5.2 Online Customer Reviews and Customer Satisfaction

OCRs can shape customer satisfaction by influencing the expectations consumers develop before consumption. According to eWOM theory, credible and informative reviews reduce information asymmetry by providing experience-based assessments of product quality, service performance, and seller reliability ([Floyd et al., 2014](#)). Consumers can use this information to develop expectations and select options that are more consistent with their needs and preferences.

Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory provides the principal theoretical justification for the relationship between OCRs and customer satisfaction. Reviews establish an initial reference point against which consumers evaluate their actual consumption experience. When fast-food quality and service performance correspond with or exceed the expectations generated by OCRs, consumers experience confirmation or positive disconfirmation, resulting in satisfaction. When the actual experience is inconsistent with favorable reviews, negative disconfirmation and dissatisfaction may occur.

This theoretical explanation indicates that the effect of OCRs on satisfaction is conditional on the accuracy and credibility of the information communicated. Informative and realistic reviews may improve satisfaction because they enable consumers to form appropriate expectations and make better-informed purchasing decisions. Previous studies have found that online reviews can enhance customer satisfaction by reducing uncertainty, strengthening confidence, and improving decision quality ([Satiawan et al., 2023](#), [Tandon et al., 2017](#), [Yu et al., 2023](#), [Zhao et al., 2020](#)). The relationship is therefore grounded primarily in eWOM theory and Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₂: Online customer reviews have a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction.

2.5.3 Customer Satisfaction and Repurchase Intention

Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory suggests that consumers develop favorable post-consumption evaluations when perceived performance meets or exceeds expectations ([Oliver, 1980](#), [Oliver, 1999](#)). These favorable evaluations reduce uncertainty regarding future purchases because satisfied consumers have evidence that the provider can deliver the expected value and service performance. Satisfaction can therefore reinforce positive attitudes, reduce consumers' motivation to search for alternatives, and strengthen their willingness to maintain a relationship with the provider ([Hellier et al., 2003](#)).

The S-O-R model further explains this relationship by positioning satisfaction as an internal cognitive and affective state that leads to a behavioral response. When consumers feel satisfied with food quality, service speed, cleanliness, convenience, and price fairness, they are more likely to respond by intending to purchase again. However, when consumers experience dissatisfaction, the availability of numerous alternative fast-food providers and low switching barriers makes switching behavior more likely.

Previous studies consistently identify satisfaction as a central predictor of repurchase intention across online and offline consumption settings ([Aurelia and Nawawi, 2021](#), [Ilyas et al., 2020](#), [Lapparan et al., 2024](#), [Mensah and Mensah, 2018](#), [Tufahati et al., 2021](#)). Accordingly, the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention is supported by Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory and the organism-response pathway of the S-O-R model. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₃: Customer satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention.

2.5.4 The Mediating Role of Customer Satisfaction

A direct relationship between OCRs and repurchase intention assumes that review information can immediately translate into future purchasing behavior. However, this explanation may be incomplete because OCRs are predominantly pre-consumption or external informational cues, whereas repurchase

intention is a post-consumption behavioral outcome. Between these two stages, consumers evaluate whether their actual experience corresponds with the expectations generated by the reviews.

The S-O-R model provides a clear theoretical structure for this indirect mechanism. OCRs function as the stimulus, customer satisfaction functions as the organism, and repurchase intention functions as the response. In this sequence, consumers first process review-based information, subsequently compare their actual experience with the expectations generated by that information, and finally develop an intention regarding future purchases.

Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory further clarifies the evaluative process within the organism component. Informative and credible reviews may establish realistic expectations and reduce perceived risk. When actual food and service performance confirms these expectations, customer satisfaction increases. Satisfaction then strengthens consumers' willingness to repurchase because it represents evidence that the provider can consistently deliver the expected value.

Previous studies have indicated that online information and service evaluations can influence future behavioral intentions through satisfaction-related mechanisms ([Chang et al., 2015](#), [Cyntya and Berlianto, 2023](#)). However, mediation should not be interpreted as an automatic consequence of favorable reviews. When actual performance does not confirm the expectations created online, satisfaction may decline and the indirect effect of OCRs on repurchase intention may weaken. Thus, customer satisfaction explains the process through which OCRs are converted into a post-consumption behavioral intention.

The mediation hypothesis is therefore explicitly grounded in the S-O-R model and Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory. The S-O-R model establishes the sequential relationship among the three constructs, while Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory explains how review-based expectations are transformed into satisfaction before influencing repurchase intention ([Junker and Sijtsma, 2001](#), [Yuksel, 2001](#)). Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₄: Customer satisfaction positively mediates the relationship between online customer reviews and repurchase intention.

2.6 Research Gap

Although online customer reviews (OCRs), customer satisfaction, and repurchase intention have been examined, three limitations remain. First, prior studies often analyze these constructs through separate direct relationships rather than as a sequential process. As a result, they explain whether OCRs affect purchase-related intentions or whether satisfaction affects repurchase intention, but provide limited insight into how review-based information develops into post-consumption behavioral responses.

Second, directly linking OCRs with repurchase intention overlooks the different stages at which these constructs operate. OCRs are external information encountered before or during purchase, whereas repurchase intention emerges after consumers evaluate their experience. Customer satisfaction therefore provides the mechanism through which review-based expectations are translated into future behavior. By integrating eWOM theory, Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory, and the S-O-R model, this study connects informational stimuli, post-consumption evaluation, and behavioral response.

Third, the effects of OCRs are context-dependent. Review valence, credibility, volume, and informativeness may produce different outcomes, while excessive or inconsistent information may increase uncertainty. Moreover, findings from e-commerce, hospitality, tourism, and digital services may not apply to fast-food consumption, which involves frequent purchases, low involvement, experiential attributes, standardized offerings, intense competition, and low switching barriers.

Makassar is a relevant setting because urban lifestyle changes, digital information use, and the growth of national and international fast-food brands have intensified customer-retention competition. Accordingly, this study examines the direct effect of OCRs on repurchase intention and the indirect

effect through customer satisfaction. The framework positions OCRs as the exogenous variable, satisfaction as the mediator, and repurchase intention as the endogenous variable.

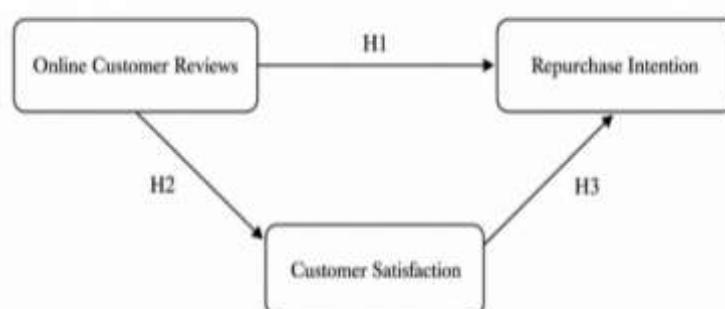


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative, explanatory, survey-based design using a cross-sectional approach. Data were collected once to examine relationships among online customer reviews, customer satisfaction, and repurchase intention. The analysis tested the effects of online customer reviews on satisfaction and repurchase intention, the effect of satisfaction on repurchase intention, and the indirect effect of reviews through satisfaction. The design examined consumers' perceptions, evaluations, and intentions. However, simultaneous data collection means the findings represent theoretically grounded predictive relationships rather than definitive temporal causality.

3.2 Population, Sampling Technique, and Sample Size

The target population comprised fast-food consumers residing in Makassar City. Because no sampling frame was available, probability sampling could not be applied. The study therefore used non-probability purposive sampling to recruit respondents with suitable experience.

Eligible respondents were Makassar residents who had purchased and consumed fast food at least three times and had read online reviews, ratings, comments, or customer-generated information concerning fast-food products or restaurants. This criterion ensured sufficient experience to evaluate satisfaction and form meaningful repurchase intentions. Purposive sampling was suitable because the study tested theoretically specified relationships using qualified respondents rather than estimating parameters. Nevertheless, unequal selection probabilities limit broader generalization.

The sample comprised 110 respondents. Adequacy was determined from model complexity and statistical power rather than solely from the ten-times rule. The largest number of predictors directed toward an endogenous construct was two: online customer reviews and customer satisfaction as predictors of repurchase intention. An a priori power analysis using a medium effect size ($f^2 = 0.15$), 0.05 significance level, 0.80 power, and two predictors indicated a minimum of approximately 68 respondents. Thus, the sample exceeded the PLS-SEM requirement ([Hair and Alamer, 2022](#)).

3.3 Data Collection and Measurement

Primary data were collected through a self-administered online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. This method enabled access to consumers across Makassar and collection, coding, and screening. Items measuring online customer reviews, satisfaction, and repurchase intention were adapted from established scales and contextualized for fast-food products, restaurants, services, and review platforms without changing their conceptual meanings. All constructs used a five-point Likert scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

Before analysis, data were screened in Microsoft Excel for completeness, eligibility, duplicate entries, invalid response patterns, and coding accuracy. Responses failing these criteria were excluded. Secondary data from peer-reviewed journals, scholarly books, and publications supported the theoretical framework, hypotheses, and construct operationalization.

3.4 Data Analysis Using PLS-SEM

Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling in SmartPLS. PLS-SEM was selected because it supports prediction-oriented research, mediation testing, latent-variable relationships, and models estimated with limited samples. It also permits simultaneous assessment of measurement and structural models ([Hair et al., 2019](#)). Analysis proceeded through measurement-model evaluation followed by structural-model assessment.

3.5 Measurement Model Assessment

Because the constructs were reflective, the measurement model was evaluated through indicator reliability, internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Indicator reliability was assessed using outer loadings. Loadings of 0.708 or higher were satisfactory. Indicators between 0.40 and 0.70 were considered for removal only when deletion improved composite reliability or average variance extracted without weakening content validity; loadings below 0.40 were unsuitable ([Hair et al., 2019](#)). Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, rho_A, and composite reliability. Values between 0.70 and 0.95 indicated acceptable reliability; lower values suggested insufficiency, while higher values indicated possible redundancy. Composite reliability was emphasized because it accounts for unequal indicator loadings.

Convergent validity was evaluated using average variance extracted. An AVE of at least 0.50 indicated that a construct explained at least half of its indicators' variance. Discriminant validity was assessed primarily using the heterotrait-monotrait ratio. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) values below 0.85 were preferred, although values below 0.90 were acceptable for conceptually related constructs. Bootstrapped HTMT confidence intervals should not include 1. The Fornell-Larcker criterion and cross-loadings were supplementary: each construct's square root of AVE should exceed its interconstruct correlations, and each indicator should load most strongly on its assigned construct.

3.6 Structural Model Assessment

The structural model assessment covered collinearity, path coefficients, significance, explained variance, effect size, and predictive relevance. Predictor collinearity was assessed using variance inflation factors. VIF values below 5 were acceptable, although values below 3 were preferred.

Hypotheses were tested through bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples. Significance was evaluated using t-values, p-values, and 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals. A relationship was significant when $p < 0.05$ and the interval excluded zero. The coefficient of determination (R^2) assessed variance in satisfaction and repurchase intention explained by their predictors. Effect sizes (f^2) of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 represented small, medium, and large contributions. Predictive relevance was assessed using Stone-Geisser's Q^2 from blindfolding. Values above zero indicated predictive relevance. PLSpredict evaluated out-of-sample predictive performance.

3.7 Mediation Analysis

Customer satisfaction's mediating role was examined using the specific indirect effect, calculated from the reviews-to-satisfaction path and the satisfaction-to-repurchase-intention path. Bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples determined significance. Mediation was supported when $p < 0.05$ and the 95% confidence interval excluded zero.

When direct and indirect effects were significant and operated in the same direction, mediation was classified as complementary partial mediation. A significant indirect but nonsignificant direct effect indicated indirect-only or full mediation. Significant effects operating in opposite directions indicated competitive mediation. Variance Accounted For was calculated by dividing the indirect effect by the

total effect, but conclusions relied primarily on bootstrapped indirect-effect significance and confidence intervals ([Hair et al., 2019](#)).

3.8 Research Assumptions and Replicability

The study assumed that respondents understood the questionnaire, recalled consumption experiences accurately, and reported actual perceptions. Eligibility criteria increased the likelihood that respondents could evaluate the constructs. Replicability was supported through defined sampling criteria, established scales, standardized response categories, documented screening procedures, and PLS-SEM thresholds, enabling comparable studies across other locations or food-service contexts.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1 Results

Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling. The analysis was conducted in two main stages. First, the measurement model was evaluated to assess indicator reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and internal consistency reliability. Second, the structural model was examined to evaluate its explanatory and predictive ability and to test the direct and indirect relationships proposed in the research model.

4.1.1 Measurement Model Assessment

Convergent validity was evaluated using indicator outer loadings and average variance extracted. Indicators with outer loadings above 0.70 were considered to demonstrate adequate indicator reliability, while an AVE value above 0.50 indicated that a construct explained more than half of the variance in its indicators ([Hair et al., 2019](#)).

The results showed that all measurement indicators had outer loading values above 0.70 and that the AVE value of each construct exceeded 0.50. These findings indicate that the indicators shared sufficient variance with their respective constructs and that online customer reviews, customer satisfaction, and repurchase intention demonstrated adequate convergent validity.

Discriminant validity was assessed using cross-loadings and the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations. The cross-loading assessment showed that each indicator loaded more strongly on its assigned construct than on the other constructs. In addition, all HTMT values were below the threshold of 0.90. These results indicate that the three constructs were empirically distinguishable and did not measure identical conceptual domains.

Internal consistency reliability was evaluated using composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha. Values above 0.70 indicate that the indicators consistently measure their respective latent constructs.

Table 1. Construct reliability test

Construct	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
Customer Satisfaction	0.852	0.852	Reliable
Online Customer Reviews	0.895	0.895	Reliable
Repurchase Intention	0.916	0.916	Reliable

As presented in Table 1, all constructs exceeded the minimum reliability threshold. Repurchase intention demonstrated the highest internal consistency, followed by online customer reviews and customer satisfaction. Overall, the measurement model provided adequate evidence that the instruments were sufficiently reliable and valid for subsequent structural model analysis.

4.1.2 Structural Model Assessment

The structural model was evaluated using the standardized root mean square residual, coefficient of determination, and predictive relevance. The SRMR value was used as a supplementary indication of

the discrepancy between the observed and model-implied correlation matrices. An SRMR value below 0.10 is generally considered acceptable in PLS-SEM analysis ([Henseler et al., 2014](#)).

Table 2. Model fit and predictive relevance

Assessment	Construct	Value	Interpretation
SRMR	Research Model	0.089	Acceptable fit
R-square	Customer Satisfaction	0.300	Moderate
R-square	Repurchase Intention	0.682	Moderate
Q-square	Customer Satisfaction	0.142	Predictive relevance
Q-square	Repurchase Intention	0.417	Predictive relevance

The SRMR value of 0.089 (see Table 2) indicates an acceptable level of approximate model fit. However, because PLS-SEM is primarily prediction-oriented, the interpretation of the structural model should place greater emphasis on explanatory power, predictive relevance, path coefficients, and the significance of the hypothesized relationships rather than relying exclusively on a global fit index.

The (R^2) value of customer satisfaction was 0.300, indicating that online customer reviews explained 30.0% of the variance in customer satisfaction. This level of explanatory power suggests that OCRs are relevant to satisfaction, although other factors not included in the model-such as food quality, service speed, cleanliness, price fairness, convenience, and employee responsiveness-are also likely to determine satisfaction.

The (R^2) value of repurchase intention was 0.682. Thus, online customer reviews and customer satisfaction jointly explained 68.2% of the variance in consumers repurchase intention. This result indicates that the model has comparatively strong explanatory relevance for future purchasing intentions in the fast-food context.

The (Q^2) values for customer satisfaction and repurchase intention were greater than zero. Therefore, the model demonstrated predictive relevance for both endogenous constructs. The higher (Q^2) value for repurchase intention indicates that the model had greater predictive relevance for consumers' intention to purchase again than for their satisfaction evaluations.

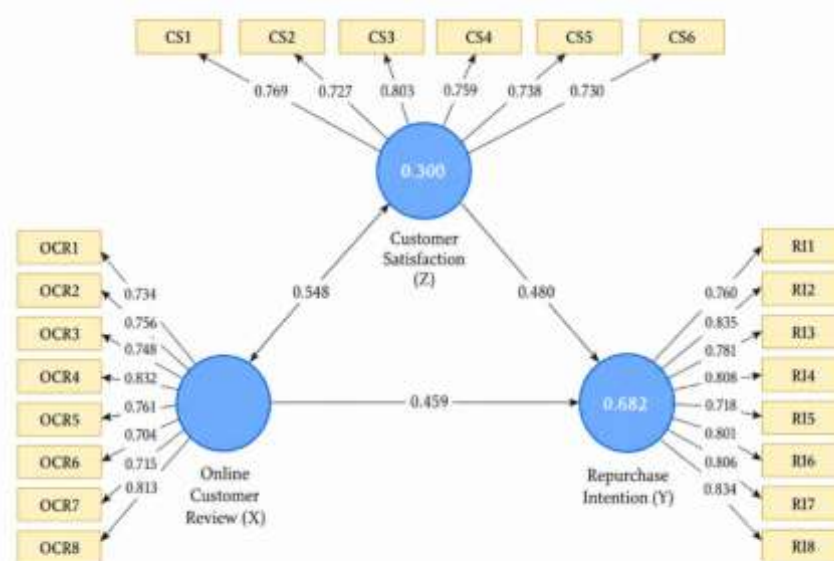


Figure 2. Structural model of the study

Figure 2 illustrates that online customer reviews influence repurchase intention through two pathways. The first is a direct pathway from OCRs to repurchase intention. The second is an indirect pathway in which OCRs influence customer satisfaction, which subsequently influences repurchase intention.

4.1.3 Direct Effect Testing

The direct relationships were evaluated using a bootstrapping procedure. At the 5% significance level using a two-tailed test, a relationship was considered statistically significant when the t-statistic exceeded 1.96 and the p-value was below 0.05.

Table 3. Direct effect test

Relationship	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	STDEV	T-statistics	P-values	Decision
OCR → Repurchase Intention	0.459	0.469	0.099	4.638	0.000	Accepted
OCR → Customer Satisfaction	0.548	0.561	0.095	5.767	0.000	Accepted
Customer Satisfaction → Repurchase Intention	0.480	0.471	0.099	4.829	0.000	Accepted

The effect of online customer reviews on repurchase intention was positive and statistically significant ($\beta = 0.459$, $t = 4.638$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, H1 was supported. More favorable consumer evaluations of online reviews were associated with stronger intentions to repurchase fast-food products.

Online customer reviews also had a positive and statistically significant effect on customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.548$, $t = 5.767$, $p < 0.001$). Accordingly, H2 was supported. Among the direct relationships examined, this pathway had the largest coefficient, indicating that OCRs were particularly relevant to the formation of consumers' satisfaction evaluations.

Customer satisfaction had a positive and statistically significant effect on repurchase intention ($\beta = 0.480$, $t = 4.829$, $p < 0.001$). Thus, H3 was supported. Consumers who reported higher levels of satisfaction also demonstrated stronger intentions to repurchase from fast-food providers.

4.1.4 Indirect Effect and Mediation Testing

The mediating role of customer satisfaction was evaluated through the significance of the specific indirect effect from online customer reviews to repurchase intention through customer satisfaction.

Table 4. Indirect effect test

Relationship	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	STDEV	T-statistics	P-values	Decision
OCR → Customer Satisfaction → Repurchase Intention	0.263	0.261	0.061	4.332	0.000	Accepted

The specific indirect effect was positive and statistically significant ($\beta = 0.263$, $t = 4.332$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, H4 was supported. This result provides evidence that customer satisfaction transmits part of the influence of online customer reviews to repurchase intention.

The nature of the mediation was determined by comparing the direct and indirect effects. The direct effect of OCRs on repurchase intention remained significant after customer satisfaction was included in the model, while the indirect effect was also significant and operated in the same positive direction. The mediation can therefore be classified as complementary partial mediation.

The Variance Accounted For value was calculated as supplementary evidence of mediation strength

$$VAF = \frac{Direct\ Effect + Indirect\ Effect}{Indirect\ Effect} \times 100\% \quad (1)$$

Equation (1) shows the formula used to determine the proportion of the indirect effect in the total effect.

$$VAF = \frac{0.459 + 0.263}{0.263} \times 100\% = 36.43\% \quad (2)$$

Equation (2) shows that the VAF value was 36.43%. The VAF value indicates that approximately 36.43% of the total influence of online customer reviews on repurchase intention was transmitted through customer satisfaction. The remaining influence occurred through the direct pathway or through other mechanisms not included in the model.

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 Online Customer Reviews and Repurchase Intention

The positive relationship between online customer reviews (OCRs) and repurchase intention indicates that consumer-generated information remains influential after purchase. OCRs therefore serve as pre-purchase information and post-purchase confirmation cues that shape judgments about future patronage. Electronic word-of-mouth theory explains that consumer reviews are persuasive because they reflect consumption experiences rather than firm-generated promotion ([Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004](#)). Credible reviews validate previous choices, strengthen confidence in performance, and reduce repurchase risk. This mechanism is relevant in fast-food markets, where purchases involve low financial risk, alternatives are numerous, and switching is easy. Favorable OCRs can serve as decision heuristics, replacing extensive restaurant comparisons. Respondents frequently accessed online reviews, while the item concerning comparisons among competing fast-food brands received a lower assessment. OCRs may therefore confirm the acceptability of familiar or considered providers rather than support systematic cross-brand evaluation.

This finding is consistent with [Fransiscus et al. \(2022\)](#), [Lestari and Maharani \(2023\)](#), [Asan \(2024\)](#), [Cheung and Thadani \(2012\)](#), [Cung et al., 2023](#), [Haeruddin, 2025](#), [Qiu and Zhang, 2024](#), [Yunus et al., 2021](#), [Zhang et al., 2025](#)), who found that favorable electronic reviews strengthen purchase-related intentions. However, OCRs do not automatically generate repurchase intention; their influence depends on credibility and experiential consistency. Artificial or contradictory reviews may weaken trust.

4.2.2 Online Customer Reviews and Customer Satisfaction

The positive effect of OCRs on customer satisfaction shows that satisfaction begins forming before consumption. Online information establishes expectations regarding food taste, service speed, cleanliness, employee responsiveness, price fairness, convenience, and overall service quality. Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory explains satisfaction as the comparison between prior expectations and perceived performance ([Oliver, 1980](#), [Oliver, 1999](#)). Informative and realistic reviews help consumers develop expectations that correspond with likely experiences. Satisfaction increases when performance confirms or exceeds these expectations, whereas inaccurate and excessively favorable reviews may inflate expectations and produce negative disconfirmation.

Thus, more positive reviews do not invariably produce greater satisfaction. The essential mechanism is alignment between review-generated expectations and performance. Review accuracy and consistency are as important as positive valence. Fast-food firms may gain attention through highly favorable content, but sustainable satisfaction depends on operational delivery that matches the online portrayal. The OCR-to-satisfaction coefficient confirms that online and offline customer journeys are interconnected. Reviews shape expectations before visiting or ordering, while actual performance determines whether those expectations are confirmed. This result supports [Torabi and Bélanger \(2021\)](#), [Xia and Ha \(2022\)](#), [Camilleri and Filieri \(2023\)](#), [Satiawan, Hamid, & Maszudi, 2023](#), and [Yu, Zhang, & Kim, 2023](#), who demonstrated that online reviews can increase satisfaction by reducing uncertainty and improving decision quality.

4.2.3 Customer Satisfaction and Repurchase Intention

Customer satisfaction positively influenced repurchase intention, confirming that favorable post-consumption evaluation is central to customer retention. Satisfaction provides experiential evidence

that a restaurant can deliver acceptable food and service performance, thereby reducing uncertainty and the need to search for alternatives.

According to Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory, satisfaction occurs when perceived performance meets or exceeds expectations ([Oliver, 1980](#), [Oliver, 1999](#)). Once satisfied, consumers possess a positive reference point for future decisions, making repurchasing from the same provider appear less risky and cognitively easier than evaluating unfamiliar alternatives. The relationship also reflects the organism-response component of the S-O-R model. Customer satisfaction represents an internal cognitive and affective evaluation, whereas repurchase intention represents the behavioral response arising from that evaluation. Satisfaction therefore has substantive consequences beyond being an attitudinal outcome.

The satisfaction-to-repurchase-intention effect was slightly stronger than the direct OCR effect, indicating that actual experience remains at least as important as digital information. Reviews may attract, reassure, and reinforce consumers, but satisfactory performance ultimately determines whether they return. This finding is consistent with [Liao et al. \(2017\)](#), [Aurelia and Nawawi \(2021\)](#), [Thuy and Ngoc Quang \(2022\)](#), [Mittal et al. \(2023\)](#), and [Hellier et al., \(2003\)](#), who identify satisfaction as a principal antecedent of repeat purchasing. This relationship is particularly important where low switching barriers enable dissatisfied customers to move easily to competitors.

4.2.4 The Mediating Role of Customer Satisfaction

The mediation analysis provides the study's main theoretical insight. The significant indirect effect confirms that OCRs influence repurchase intention partly by shaping customer satisfaction. Their effect therefore extends beyond direct persuasion and is translated into future purchasing intentions through consumers' evaluations of actual experiences.

This result supports the sequential S-O-R logic. OCRs operate as external stimuli containing informational and social cues; customer satisfaction represents the organism's internal evaluation; and repurchase intention constitutes the behavioral response. Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory further explains that OCRs form expectations, while satisfaction emerges after those expectations are compared with actual food and service performance. Complementary partial mediation indicates two simultaneous mechanisms. First, OCRs directly influence repurchase intention through risk reduction, social proof, confidence, and validation of previous choices. Second, they indirectly influence repurchase intention by establishing expectations that are subsequently evaluated through satisfaction. The VAF value of 36.43% shows that satisfaction explains a meaningful, although not dominant, proportion of the total OCR effect. Other potential mechanisms may include trust, perceived value, brand credibility, perceived popularity, reduced uncertainty, and restaurant attitude. Because these variables were not tested, they remain possible rather than confirmed explanations.

This finding is consistent with [Camilleri and Filieri \(2023\)](#), [Ginting et al. \(2023\)](#), and [Cyntya & Berlianto, \(2023\)](#), who show that online information affects behavioral intentions through internal psychological evaluations. This study extends that evidence by demonstrating satisfaction's mediating role among fast-food consumers in Makassar.

4.2.5 Integrated Interpretation of the Findings

Collectively, the findings show that customer retention results from the interaction between digital information and actual service delivery. OCRs influence expectations and provide social evidence about restaurant reliability. Satisfaction indicates whether those expectations are confirmed, while repurchase intention arises from both the continuing persuasive effect of OCRs and the experience received. The model integrates eWOM theory, Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory, and the S-O-R framework. eWOM theory explains why OCRs serve as influential external information. Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory explains how review-generated expectations are compared with performance to form satisfaction. The S-O-R model connects OCRs as stimulus, satisfaction as organism, and repurchase intention as response.

Operationally, review management should not be treated merely as promotion. Encouraging favorable reviews without ensuring consistent food quality, service speed, cleanliness, responsiveness, price fairness, and transaction convenience may raise expectations without creating satisfaction. Firms should maintain current, credible, and informative review profiles while avoiding manipulative practices that may produce negative disconfirmation.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Conclusion

This study examined the effects of OCRs on repurchase intention, with customer satisfaction as a mediator among fast-food consumers in Makassar. PLS-SEM results supported all hypotheses and confirmed both direct and indirect pathways.

OCRs positively affected repurchase intention by strengthening confidence, reducing uncertainty, and confirming previous choices. They also positively affected satisfaction by shaping expectations concerning food, service, cleanliness, price, convenience, and the overall experience. Satisfaction positively affected repurchase intention because fulfilled expectations reduced consumers' motivation to seek alternatives. Customer satisfaction complementarily and partially mediated the OCR-repurchase intention relationship. OCRs directly influenced future intentions through credibility, social confirmation, and risk reduction, while indirectly influencing them through post-consumption satisfaction.

The findings support eWOM theory, Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory, and the S-O-R model. They demonstrate that sustainable repurchase intention depends on consistency between online reputation and actual service performance. Positive digital conversations create strategic value only when the delivered experience fulfills the expectations those conversations generate. The positive relationship between online customer reviews and repurchase intention supports the proposition that consumer-generated digital information continues to influence consumers even after their initial purchase. OCRs are therefore not only acquisition-oriented information that assists prospective customers in choosing a restaurant. They can also reinforce or challenge existing customers' evaluations of whether a fast-food provider remains worthy of future patronage.

5.2 Research Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, it focused exclusively on fast-food consumers in Makassar, so the findings may not fully represent consumers in other Indonesian cities with different demographic, cultural, economic, digital, and market characteristics. Second, non-probability purposive sampling was used because no complete sampling frame was available. Although this approach ensured that respondents had relevant consumption and review experience, it limited statistical generalizability. Third, the study involved 110 respondents. This sample was adequate for the specified PLS-SEM model, but a larger and more diverse sample would support subgroup analysis across brands, purchasing channels, and review platforms. Fourth, the cross-sectional design captured perceptions at one point in time and therefore identified theoretically supported associations rather than definitive temporal causality. Consumer evaluations may change after new consumption experiences, promotions, reviews, or service improvements.

Fifth, the study relied on self-reported questionnaires, which may be influenced by recall bias, social desirability, and response consistency. Repurchase intention also reflects planned behavior rather than objectively observed purchases. Sixth, the model included only online customer reviews, customer satisfaction, and repurchase intention. Other relevant factors, including trust, perceived value, food quality, service quality, price fairness, brand image, digital engagement, familiarity, and switching costs, were excluded. Finally, OCRs were treated as a single construct without distinguishing review valence, credibility, quality, volume, consistency, reviewer expertise, visual content, or platform reputation.

5.3 Suggestions and Directions for Future Research

Fast-food businesses should integrate online review management with digital marketing and service-quality improvement. Reviews should be credible, informative, recent, and consistent with actual customer experiences. Firms should monitor reviews across platforms and classify feedback into categories such as food taste, service speed, cleanliness, packaging, delivery accuracy, transaction convenience, and price fairness. A periodic dashboard should track ratings, review volume, response rate, response time, recurring complaints, complaint resolution, and customer sentiment.

Businesses should establish standardized response procedures. Positive reviews should receive personalized appreciation, while negative reviews should be addressed promptly, professionally, and non-defensively through acknowledgement, apology, corrective action, and appropriate service recovery. Recurring complaints should be communicated to operational units and monitored until performance improves. Marketing claims regarding freshness, speed, cleanliness, portion size, or delivery accuracy must also be supported by consistent operating standards.

Customers should be encouraged to provide authentic reviews through QR codes, digital receipts, loyalty applications, packaging, or post-purchase messages without pressure to submit only positive ratings. Satisfaction should be converted into repurchase and advocacy through loyalty programs, personalized offers, feedback surveys, and memorable experiences.

Future studies should include other regions, larger samples, probability or quota sampling, and longitudinal designs. Researchers should compare intention with actual purchases using transaction records, loyalty data, or follow-up surveys. Future models may include additional mediators, predictors, and moderators, such as trust, perceived value, brand credibility, perceived risk, digital literacy, skepticism, involvement, familiarity, switching costs, and consumption frequency. OCRs should also be disaggregated into specific dimensions and compared across local, national, and international brands and dine-in, takeaway, and delivery channels. These extensions would improve generalizability and provide a more nuanced explanation of customer retention.

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Author Contribution

MIWH contributed to the conceptualization, methodology, supervision, project administration, validation, and writing–review and editing of the manuscript. IAR was responsible for the investigation, literature review, formal analysis, questionnaire development, and writing–original draft preparation. MAFAP contributed to data curation, software application, formal analysis, visualization, interpretation of findings, and writing–original draft preparation. NRP was involved in investigation, resources, data validation, reference management, editing, and manuscript formatting. All authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript and agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

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