

# DETERMINANTS OF REVISIT INTENTIONS IN FAST-FOOD RESTAURANTS: THE ROLE OF PERCEIVED CUSTOMER VALUE AND RESTAURANT LEGITIMACY

**Clay Hutama BASERA** 

Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria, South Africa  
BaseraCH@tut.ac.za

**Johan W. de JAGER** 

Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria, South Africa  
DeJagerJW@tut.ac.za

**Anton DROTSKY** 

Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria, South Africa  
DrotskyGAP1@tut.ac.za

**Pieter STEENKAMP** 

Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Cape Town, South Africa  
Steenkampi@cput.ac.za

## Abstract

This study sought to determine the effects of customer perceived value and legitimacy on customer revisit intentions in the fast-food restaurant industry. The study was grounded in the institutional theory. The Partial Least Squares Structural Equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was applied to examine the relationships between customer perceived value, legitimacy (pragmatic and social) with revisit intention. Using data collected from 550 respondents, the results revealed that customer perceived value insignificantly affects fast-food restaurants' pragmatic legitimacy, while it yields significant positive effect on their social legitimacy. Both pragmatic and social legitimacy have significant positive effect on customers' intentions to revisit fast-food restaurants. Considering the weak effect of perceived value on pragmatic legitimacy, managers of fast-food restaurants are therefore implored to transform value into concrete customer benefits and actively build and communicate legitimacy through promoting ethical conduct, trust, consistency and engagement in socio-norm based actions that elicit repeat patronage. More so, they must clearly relay their marketing messages on how their products satisfy customer needs because customers need to feel and understand their value propositions better. Finally, the study widens the scope of hospitality literature by proffering an integrated framework that aligns institutional valuations with customer behavioural outcomes, thereby expanding the theoretical frontiers for a more insightful understanding of customer– organisation linkages in the fast-food service contexts.

**Keywords:** Customer perceived value, Revisit intention, Fast-food restaurant, Legitimacy.

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.24818/beman/2026.16.2-02>

**Article history:** Received: 23 February 2026, Revised: 08 April 2026, Accepted: 20 April 2026, Published online: 25 May 2026

**How to cite this article:** Basera, C. H., de Jager, J. W., Drotsky, A., & Steenkamp, P. (2026). Determinants of revisit intentions in fast-food restaurants: The role of perceived customer value and restaurant legitimacy. *Business Excellence and Management*, 16(2), 23–41. <https://doi.org/10.24818/beman/2026.16.2-02>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The success of fast-food restaurants depends on what customers prefer, expect and their buying decisions. Customers' perceptions of value is a critical enabler of a restaurant's activities which pacify and approve its performance as important. Legitimacy is essential owing to its valuable effects on organisational competitiveness. Given its role in stimulating revisit intentions and customer endorsements, legitimacy is imperative for successful execution of a fast-food restaurant's marketing strategies. Accordingly, services and hospitality marketing scholars have increasingly become attracted to exploring the predictors of legitimacy and revisit intentions (Yang et al., 2020; Blanco-González et al., 2023). Perceived value has been studied lately in retailing and other fields as an antecedent of legitimacy and repatronage intention (Sánchez-del-Río-Vázquez et al., 2025; Yang et al., 2020; Blanco- González et al., 2023). Perceived value is rated the most critical determinant of purchase decision making and inference of value upon organisations (García-Salirrosas et al., 2024) and as such the sole purpose for organisational existence is value creation as the means for attainment of goals (Islam et al., 2024). The institutional theory posits that to acquire legitimacy, organisations must infuse themselves with value in order to warrant survival (Sánchez-del-Río-Vázquez et al., 2025). Previously, the retail sector has applied the institutional theory using performative and symbolic actions (Handelman & Arnold, 1999), task oriented and socio-based actions (Kim & Ha, 2020) and service quality oriented (Yang et al., 2020) factors as determinants of retailer legitimacy. Despite prior studies having extensively explored determinants of revisit intentions in fast-food contexts, particularly emphasizing CPV (Zeithaml, 1988; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001) and service quality dimensions (Parasuraman et al., 1988), there is a dearth in integrating restaurant legitimacy as a complementary construct influencing customer decision-making. Extant literature has often discussed revisit intention as a dependent of trust, perceived value or satisfaction, trust isolation (Cronin et al., 2000; Han & Ryu, 2009), giving less attention to how legitimacy interacts with value perceptions in shaping behavioural intentions. More so, empirical research in emerging markets, particularly within the African fast-food contexts, is scarce, despite the differences in institutional environments and consumer expectations that may significantly cause variations in the legitimacy–value–revisit intention relationship. This points to a major gap in understanding how CPV and restaurant legitimacy jointly influence revisit intentions, especially in under- researched, developing economy domains.

Thus, the study attempts at addressing the pertinent research question, i.e., how can FFR businesses infuse customer perceived value (CPV) dimensions into their operations in order attain legitimacy and in turn enjoy positive customer support through referrals, endorsements, repeat purchase and revisit intention? Based on the institutional theory, the study seeks to establish how value as perceived by customers impacts pragmatic and social legitimacy and to examine how pragmatic and social (moral) legitimacy predict revisit intention. To address the major question, 550 FFR customers were surveyed and the partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was used to test the hypothesised propositions about relationships.

The results proffer significant implications to fast-food restaurant management and emphasises the relevance of infusing CPV with organisational processes. Moreover, this study embodies the institutional theory on how the two forms of legitimacy affect intentions to revisit a FFR. The study is structured in this manner. Firstly, the theoretical framework guiding the study (the institutional theory) is discussed, followed by customer perceived value (CPV), legitimacy and repatronage intention. Secondly, a description of methods adopted is discussed and finally, findings are analysed, discussed and implications are made thereof.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Institutional theory

The theory posits that the operations of an organisation are affected by a myriad of external influences namely, diverse stakeholder demands, legal and regulatory requirements, norms and cultural differences (Berthod, 2018; Yang et al., 2020). DiMaggio (1988) states that the theory underscores that an organisation's environment comprises the socio-cultural structures that represent the social reality. Thus, organisations' operations are bound by highly complex institutional environmental systems shaped by socio-cultural norms, beyond their primary economic objective of making profit (Scott, 1987). Riding on the theory's logic, Meyer and Scott (1992, p. 1) stressed that organisations are "constructed as legitimate agents of great collective purposes, from technical rationality and social progress to social integration and justice" and as opined by Suchman (1995), legitimation is an understanding that an organisations' actions conform to the institutional environment's beliefs, norms and value systems. Suchman (1995) categorises legitimacy into pragmatic and social legitimacy. The former depends on the individual's self-interest and the ability of the organisation to meet his/her needs. It is often motivated by self-centered motives. On the other hand, social legitimacy depends on socially intrinsic driven behaviour and "reflects a positive normative evaluation of the organisation and its activities" (Suchman, 1995, p. 579). Social legitimacy is deduced by evaluating the organisation's behaviour on societal welfare (Handelman & Arnold, 1999). For

the fast-food restaurant industry, the institutional theory provides that customers' decisions regarding what to purchase do not solely depend on economic influences but also on socio-culturally driven values. Just as Yang et al. (2020) found out the necessity for retailers to engage in certain actions to gain legitimacy, so is case with fast-food restaurants if they desire to achieve long term success. Therefore, by embracing the institutional theory, it is assumed that legitimacy (pragmatic and social) plays a major catalytic role on the association of customer perceived value and repatronage intention in the FFR sector.

The study seeks to open new frontiers in the FFR services sector as apparently there is barely no empirical research in this domain that has explored the nexus between CPV, legitimacy and revisit intention except for prior studies done in the retail services sector (Handelman & Arnold, 1999; Yang et al., 2020; Sánchez-del-Río-Vázquez et al., 2025).

## 2.2 Customer perceived value (CPV)

The customer's perception of value is considered a strategic imperative in the marketing discipline, critical in creating and sustaining competitive advantage (Sánchez-del-Río-Vázquez et al., 2025). Femina and Santhi (2024) state that perceived value is subjective and relies on the comparative assessment of product or service utility against the sacrifices made to obtain them. Customers use personal attributes and experience to appraise value and their evaluations are subjective, and organisations struggle to determine them (Leroi-Werelds, 2019). Zauner et al. (2015) maintain that value may be interpreted differently due to diverse individual perceptions. For instance, it may mean low price, utility obtained in a product. It may also mean value commensurate with price paid or that value is the equivalence of what one sacrifices and gets. Zeithaml's (1988, p.14) definition embraces all the four views of value and states that "perceived value is the consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product based on what is received and what is given". Pranadetha et al. (2025) posit that perceived value compares benefits attained by customers in relation to total costs incurred. It weighs benefits and against costs incurred by customers during product use. Due to its subjectivity, perceived value can be achieved through understanding customer expectations and experiences. Dhasan and Aryupong (2019) assert that perceived value is three pronged i.e., it has product, service and price fairness dimensions. Kotler and Keller (2008, p. 49) state that, "product quality is the totality of of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear its ability to satisfy stated or implied customer needs". The definition emphasises how the product meets stated or implied needs of customers. Higher product quality warrants greater customer satisfaction. Service quality is equally an integral feature of perceived value. As suggested by Berry et al. (1988), service quality compares what customers hope to get and what they real receive after a service experience. More so, price fairness justifies the price worthiness in relation to the product acquired (Firdaus & Surianto, 2024; Pranadetha et

al., 2025). When price is perceived as fair, perceived value surges. Conversely, price conceived as unfair, brings dissatisfaction and other negative behavioural consequences. Therefore, effectively managing those aspects enables fast- food restaurants to harness perceived quality, loyalty and positive behaviours (Kusumawati & Sri Rahayu, 2020).

### 2.3 Legitimacy

Sustainability of organisations has been attributed to their legitimacy (Sánchez-del- Río-Vázquez et al., 2025). Greenwood et al. (2017) contend that legitimacy is the fulcrum upon which organisations can be understood. Notable studies resolved that legitimacy enhances organisational survival, growth and sustainability (Zhang & Borden, 2024; Pranadetha et al., 2025). Thus, with legitimation, if fast-food organisations get more access to resources (Díez-Martín et al., 2022), they can attain survival because they can elicit stakeholder behaviours positively (Blanco- González et al., 2023; Amani, 2024). Legitimacy is described by Suchman (1995, p. 574) as “a generalised perception or assumption that the actions of an entity in society are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions”. Subsequently, the definition was revived by Deephouse et al. (2017, p. 9), who maintained that legitimacy “is the perceived appropriateness of the organisation to a social system in terms of rules, values, norms and definitions”. While conceptualisation of legitimacy is not unanimous among many researchers (Pranadetha et al., 2025), this study adopts two facets namely, pragmatic and social legitimacy. Popularised as the exchange legitimacy, pragmatic legitimacy are all desirable practical benefits offered by the organisation to its public. According to Sánchez-del-Río-Vázquez et al. (2025, p. 5), “pragmatic legitimacy is shaped by three aspects: (a) direct benefits on the individual, social, and global welfare of the consumer; (b) long-term or indirect benefits on the individual, social, and global welfare of the consumer; and (c) the consumer’s belief that the company puts the focus on the consumer’s own self-interest”. Zhang and Borden (2024) encourage organisations to be more attentive to stakeholder interests to gain pragmatic legitimacy. Social legitimacy is guaranteed when organisations’ activities are approved as normative and positive. Organisational behaviours should align with societal values and norms because stakeholders appraise them to determine if they are a social fit (Zhang & Borden, 2024). Assessment of social legitimacy focuses on four considerations namely, organisation’s outputs, its techniques and procedures, systems and leadership charisma and appropriateness with moral values.

### 2.4 Revisit intention

When restaurants offer services to customers, they should consider that competitors are also offering similar service benefits that equally appeal to the same market, which allows customers to enjoy variety

and more optional choices (Chun & Nyam-Ochir, 2020). Customers anticipate getting value when they patronise a restaurant, and the service provider needs to consistently offer service that elicits repatronage behaviours and strongly lures new customers. More revenue is attached to repeat business compared to new business. Chu and Nyan-Ochir (2020, p. 4) describe “customer revisit intention as a customer’s intention to revisit the same restaurant and recommend it to members of their circle”. It is post-experience behaviour whereby guests repeat a particular purchase action or revert to the same eatery (Manyangara et al., 2023). Restaurants that deliver exceptional benefits to patrons receive visitor endorsements, loyalty and favourable information sharing via word of mouth (WOM).

## 2.5 Conceptual framework and development of hypotheses

### 2.5.1 Perceived value and legitimacy

Sweeney and Soutar’s (2001) four-dimensional perceived value (PERVAL) typology organises value into emotional, social, financial and quality value. Customers derive emotional and social value when they develop positive feelings and trust towards a particular restaurant brand (Sánchez-del-Río-Vázquez et al., 2025). Equally, financial and quality values appeal to the functional utility of a brand in terms of the price-value and brand superiority perceptions (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). Legitimacy is realised when customers feel secure, trust and abide by restaurant’s actions and decisions individually and collectively (Amani, 2024). The direct benefits that customer anticipate gaining from restaurant brand enable them to perceive the restaurant as pragmatic legitimate. Thus, Sweeney and Soutar (2001) posit that an increase in quality and financial values brings forth better pragmatic legitimacy perception by customers. Moreover, customers conceive the social value created by the organisation, as important and consequently leading to enhanced perceived moral legitimacy (Sánchez-del-Río-Vázquez et al., 2025). Amani (2024) resolved customers’ perceptions of the worth of green packaging as responsible and socially acceptable led to brand legitimacy. In Seville, Sánchez-del-Río-Vázquez et al. (2025) explored how perceived value impacted legitimacy and revealed that all the three sub constructs (i.e., pragmatic, social and cognitive) were directly and positively predicted by perceived value. Borrowing from the institutional theory, restaurant brands that are bound by regulatory, institutional norms and socially constructive value systems are perceived as legitimate.

H1: Customer perceived value positively affects FFR pragmatic legitimacy.

H2: Customer perceived value positively affects FFR social legitimacy.

### 2.5.2 Legitimacy and revisit intention

Organisational resilience and success depend on legitimacy (Suchman, 1995; Blanco-González et al., 2023) and operations of legitimate organisations are not questionable and are devoid of societal scrutiny. Generally, stakeholders desire to associate with organisations that are considered legitimate and desist from establishing ties with those whose social standings are questionable to the social value system (Blanco-González et al., 2023; Díez-Martín et al., 2022). Upon acquiring legitimacy, organisations like FFRs, can enjoy numerous advantages such as customer backing, loyalty and commitment, unrestrained market access and can compete effectively for resources in intensely competitive markets (Han et al., 2011; Miotto et al., 2020). Díez-Martín et al. (2021) maintain that legitimacy has considerable effect on the organisation's social and economic transactions and strongly impacts resources organisations should manage to build long term sustainable dealings with customers (Blanco-González et al., 2023; Payne et al., 2021). The success of FFR organisations can be built on loyalty and commitment (Walsh et al., 2010) and as Yang et al. (2020) pointed out, these strongly shape future consumer behaviours. Stangl et al. (2017) contends that highly loyal customers do not switch brands but rather revisit the same organisation when the same need arises. Blanco-González et al., (2023, p. 3) state that "legitimacy generates several advantages for the organisation, such as the intention to maintain long-term relationships, improve its image or reputation, or benefit from positive word of mouth". They contend that it is inadequate to just acquire legitimacy, but it is more meaningful if the organisations share it with customers by consistently communicating with all of them to ensure transparency and accountability are achieved. In highly competitive businesses such as the culinary sector, legitimacy is a critical determinant of consumer behaviour and attitudes, because it provokes favourable evaluations of the organisations and what they offer. Valor et al., (2021) affirm that consumers perceive an organisation as being compliant with institutional norms, they offer it legitimacy and pledge to continuously render it support within society. In their study, Blanco-González et al. (2023) observed that legitimacy had considerable positive influence on revisit intention. It is worthwhile for a fast-foods restaurant to strive to consistently transform its pragmatic and social legitimacy into revisit intention.

H3: FFR's pragmatic legitimacy positively affects customer revisit intention.

H4: FFR's social legitimacy positively affects customer revisit intention.

The presentation of the linkages of the variables is summarized in Figure 1.

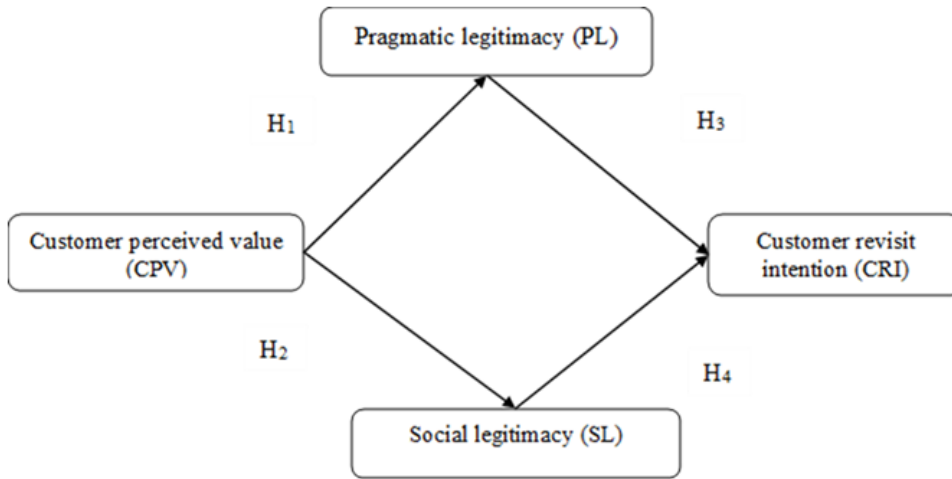


FIGURE 1. RESEARCH MODEL  
Source: Authors' research

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Sample

The study was premised on the FFR sector. Targeting this sector was necessitated by the fact that these food dealers sell basic products which warrant frequent revisiting by customers thereby promoting multiple interactions among people (i.e. with other buyers, front office staff, etc.) and despite the upsurge of online fast-food buyers, FFRs have remained vibrant, making it a relevant setting to establish the relational linkages between variables for this study. A survey was conducted based on an online questionnaire which was sent to eight hundred FFR customers in major South African cities. The administration of the instrument was carried out by two of the co researchers between 01 December 2025 and 31 January 2026. Randomized selection of participants was ensured based on the use of online platforms such as face book, WhatsApp, LinkedIn and X (formerly twitter) and the sample was deemed representative of the South African population with ages above 18 years as represented by sample profiles in Table 1. In total five hundred and sixty-four responses were received and of these, 550 were found suitable for data analysis after data cleaning.

#### 3.2 Variable measurement

Items for all variables of the study were measured based on items revised from extant literature scales that used a 5-point comparative Likert scale. To measure CPV, three items were improved from Ryu et al. (2008) and Slack et al. (2020). For PL, 3 items were borrowed from Yang et al. (2020). Similarly, the items (4) for measuring SL were modified from Yang et al.'s (2020) study. To measure RI, the 4 items proffered by Cachon-Rodríguez et al. (2021) and Tuncer et al. (2020).

### 3.3 Data analysis

Based on Ringle et al. (2022), Smart PLS 4 statistical software was utilised to analyse results. As provided by Hair et al. (2019), the use of PLS-SEM produces the best analytical results particularly when analysing multifaceted interrelationships among several constructs and indicators. In comparison to other techniques, PLS- SEM is more ideal due to its flexibility in modeling and data manipulation. In this regard PLS-SEM was preferred because the study was premised on predicting the dependent variable and more so due to its higher statistical power and robustness particularly when dealing with studies with smaller samples (Hair et al., 2019). Analysis began with assessing the measurement model and this involved the examination of each item's reliability (loadings), analysis of internal consistency of the scale based on Cronbach's alpha (CA) and composite reliability (CR), as well as testing convergent validity (CV) using the average variance extracted (AVE). In line with conventional standards acceptable thresholds for this study were set at CV ( $\geq 0.70$ ), A $\geq 0.70$ ), AVE ( $\geq 0.50$ ) and  $\geq 0.50$ ) and CR ( $\geq 0.70$ ). To assess discriminant validity (DV), the Fornell–Larcker criterion was utilised and the threshold was set at  $\geq 0.50$ .

To establish whether there was multicollinearity among latent constructs variance inflation factors (VIFs) were assessed and as norm it was put at below 5. The Goodness of Fit was appraised using  $R^2$  and  $Q^2$  (with both values not surpassing zero). Finally, the structural relationships among the study constructs were analysed by means of the PLS method in SmartPLS4.

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1 Sample characteristics

Table 1 displays the socio-demographic profiles of respondents in a study on CPV and legitimacy (PL and SL) affecting revisit intentions in South African fast-food restaurants. Knowing respondents' demographics, age, gender, education, employment, and visit frequency is crucial, as these factors influence perceptions, trust, and revisit intentions. The table offers a sample overview to contextualise further analyses.

TABLE 1. RESPONDENTS' SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	18 - 25 years old	404	73.45%
	26 - 34 years old	97	17.64%
	35 - 42 years old	30	5.45%
	43 - 50 years old	13	2.36%
	51+ years old	6	1.10%
Gender	Male	219	39.82%
	Female	331	60.18%
Education	No formal qualification	17	3.10%
	Primary - Grades 1-7	9	1.60%
	High school - Grades 8-12	169	30.70%
	Diploma/ technical certificate	161	29.30%

	Degree	114	20.70%
	Post-degree qualification	72	13.10%
	Other	8	1.50%
Employment	Student	270	49.10%
	Part-time employed	54	9.80%
	Self employed	31	5.60%
	Full-time employed	157	28.50%
	Unemployed	32	5.80%
	Retired	6	1.10%
Frequency	Less than 2 times	132	24.00%
	Between 2 and 4 times	226	41.10%
	Between 5 and 6 times	90	16.40%
	More than 6 times per month	102	18.50%

Source: Authors' research

Most respondents were aged 18–25 years (73.45%), indicating that young adults predominantly drive fast-food consumption in South Africa. Females constituted a larger share of the sample (60.18%) than males (39.82%). Most respondents were relatively well educated, with over 63% having completed post-secondary education (diploma, degree, or post-degree qualification).

Nearly half of the respondents were students (49.1%), followed by those in full-time employment (28.5%), reflecting a consumer base with time-sensitive lifestyles that may favour fast food consumption. In terms of visit frequency, most respondents reported visiting fast-food restaurants regularly, with 41.1% visiting between two and four times per month and 18.5% visiting more than six times per month. This confirms that the sample consists primarily of repeat customers, making it suitable for analysing revisit intentions.

#### 4.2 Reliability and validity

To ascertain the quality of the measurement model, internal consistency and CV were examined using CA, CR and AVE. These show how well observed variables represent their constructs. Reliability reflects how consistently measurement items capture the same concept; weak reliability suggests ambiguity or inconsistent responses, affecting precision.

The measurement model statistics reported in Table 2 include item loadings, Cronbach's alpha, CV and AVE for all study constructs. Indicator reliability was evaluated using standardised factor loadings and as suggested by Hair et al. (2022), values of 0.50 or higher were considered acceptable. The results demonstrate satisfactory reliability and convergent validity for the constructs of customer perceived value (CPV), pragmatic legitimacy (PL), social legitimacy (SL), and customer revisit intention (CRI), confirming their suitability for further analysis.

Table 2 presents the reliability and CV results for the study constructs. In this case, all CR values for the constructs exceed the recommended limit of 0.70, while the AVE values surpass 0.50, signifying

**BASERA, C. H., de JAGER, J. W., DROTSKY, A., STEENKAMP, P.**  
**DETERMINANTS OF REVISIT INTENTIONS IN FAST-FOOD RESTAURANTS: THE ROLE OF PERCEIVED CUSTOMER  
 VALUE AND RESTAURANT LEGITIMACY**

acceptable construct reliability and CV. Thus, the results suggest that the measurements of items sufficiently capture their respective latent variables.

**TABLE 2. RELIABILITY RESULTS**

Items	CA	CR	AVE
CPV	0.701	0.833	0.625
PL	0.701	0.831	0.621
RI	0.737	0.829	0.550
SL	0.820	0.880	0.648

Source: Authors' research

CA values vary from 0.701 to 0.820, surpassing the minimum acceptable level of 0.70 and confirming satisfactory internal consistency across all constructs. Based on Hair et al.'s (2022) proposition, the reliability indicators demonstrate that customer perceived value (CPV), pragmatic legitimacy (PL), social legitimacy (SL), and customer revisit intention (CRI) are measured reliably and are suitable for subsequent structural analysis.

Table 3 reports the results of the DV evaluation.

**TABLE 3. FRONELL-LARCKER CRITERION RESULTS**

Constructs	PCV	PL	RI	SL
PCV	<b>0.79</b>			
PL	0.469	<b>0.788</b>		
RI	0.108	0.182	<b>0.742</b>	
SL	0.442	0.707	0.255	<b>0.805</b>

Note: The AVE square roots are emboldened

Source: Authors' research

DV is supported when the square roots of the AVE for all constructs are greater than their associations with other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2022). As indicated by the bold diagonal values, the AVE square roots for customer perceived value (PCV), pragmatic legitimacy (PL), customer revisit intention (RI), and social legitimacy (SL) are all exceeding their corresponding inter-construct correlations. These results approve that the constructs are analytically unique and demonstrate adequate DV within the measurement model.

Multicollinearity among the latent constructs was assessed using variance inflation factors (VIFs). The VIF results for all latent variables are reported in Table 4.

**TABLE 4. FULL COLLINEARITY (VIF) RESULTS**

Paths	VIF	Paths	VIF
CPV -> PL	1.000	PL -> RI	1.999
CPV -> SL	1.000	SL -> RI	1.999

Source: Authors' research

Table 4 presents the VIF values for all paths in the structural model to assess multicollinearity. As endorsed by Hair et al. (2022), VIF values below 5 show that multicollinearity is not a barrier. All VIF values range between 1.000 and 1.999, well below the threshold, suggesting that the predictor constructs do not exhibit multicollinearity and that the model estimates are stable and reliable.

### 4.3 Goodness of fit

To establish the model's explanatory and predictive power  $R^2$  and  $Q^2$  were used, which provide insights into model fit. According to Briones-Penalver et al. (2018), both values should exceed zero to indicate an acceptable fit. Selected goodness-of-fit results generated by SmartPLS 4.0 are presented in Table 5.

TABLE 5. GOODNESS OF FIT RESULTS

Endogenous latent variable	$Q^2$	$R^2$	Standardised root mean square residual (SRMR)	Normed Fit Index (NFI)
PL	0.210	0.220	0.079	0.903
SL	0.186	0.196		
RI	0.008	0.065		

Source: Authors' research

Table 5 presents the goodness-of-fit statistics for the model. The  $R^2$  value for pragmatic legitimacy (PL) is 0.220, signifying that the model accounts for 22% of variance in PL. The  $Q^2$  value of 0.210 exceeds zero, demonstrating adequate predictive relevance for the endogenous construct (Briones-Penalver et al., 2018). Additionally, the model fit indices indicate an SRMR of 0.079, below the recommended standard of 0.08, and an NFI of 0.903, indicating an acceptable overall fit.

### 4.4 Structural model

The structural relationships among the study constructs were examined using the partial least squares (PLS) approach in SmartPLS. This technique allows simultaneous assessment of multiple latent variables and their interrelationships. The results of the structural model analysis, significance levels, and path coefficients are presented in Table 6.

TABLE 6. STRUCTURAL MODEL'S PLS RESULTS

Hypothesis	Relationship	Coefficient				Decision
		Std Beta	SE	T	P-values	
H <sub>1</sub>	PCV à PL	0.469	0.042	11.122	0.000	Supported
H <sub>2</sub>	PCV à SL	0.442	0.041	10.724	0.000	Supported
H <sub>3</sub>	PL à RI	0.003	0.080	0.038	0.970	Not Supported
H <sub>4</sub>	SL à RI	0.253	0.080	3.161	0.002	Supported

Source: Authors' research

The analysis shows that customer perceived value (CPV) has considerable positive effect on pragmatic legitimacy (PL) ( $\beta = 0.469$ ,  $t = 11.122$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), supporting H1. This implies that higher perceived value strengthens customers' perceptions of the practical or functional legitimacy of fast-food restaurants, suggesting that value for money and utility directly enhance confidence in the firm's operations.

CPV also significantly affects social legitimacy (SL) ( $\beta = 0.442$ ,  $t = 10.724$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), supporting H2. This suggests that when customers conceive greater value in fast-food offerings, they are likely to view the restaurant as socially acceptable and aligned with community norms, highlighting the role of perceived value in shaping socially driven legitimacy perceptions.

BASERA, C. H., de JAGER, J. W., DROTSKY, A., STEENKAMP, P.  
DETERMINANTS OF REVISIT INTENTIONS IN FAST-FOOD RESTAURANTS: THE ROLE OF PERCEIVED CUSTOMER  
VALUE AND RESTAURANT LEGITIMACY

Pragmatic legitimacy (PL) does not significantly affect customer revisit intention (RI) ( $\beta = 0.003$ ,  $t = 0.038$ ,  $p = 0.970$ ), which leads to the disconfirmation of H3. This implies that functional or practical legitimacy alone does not motivate customers to return, suggesting that operational efficiency or service quality may be necessary but not sufficient to drive revisit behaviour in the fast-food context.

Social legitimacy (SL) positively affects customer revisit intention (RI) ( $\beta = 0.253$ ,  $t = 3.161$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ), supporting H4. This outcome augments the relevance of socially driven perceptions, such as conformity to community expectations and peer approval, in encouraging repeat patronage at fast-food restaurants. Customers have the audacity to revisit when they perceive the restaurant as socially legitimate. These results submit that H1, H2, and H4 are supported, while H3 is rejected.

Figure 2 summarises the fitted model, including coefficients and factor loadings.

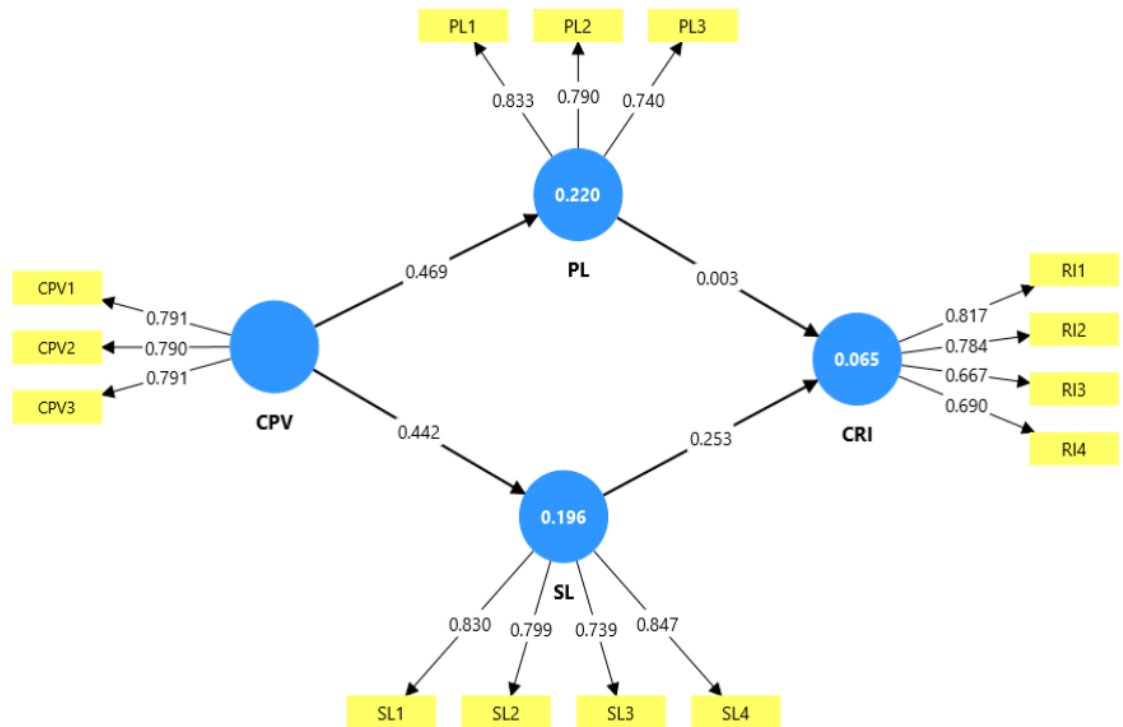


FIGURE 2. SEM WITH COEFFICIENTS  
Source: Authors' research

The PLS-SEM path model (Figure 2) illustrates the relationships among customer perceived value (CPV), pragmatic legitimacy (PL), social legitimacy (SL), and customer revisit intention (CRI). The endogenous constructs exhibit moderate explanatory power, with  $R^2$  values of 0.220 for PL, 0.196 for SL, and 0.065 for CRI, indicating that CPV accounts for 22% of the variance in PL, 19.6% in SL, and 6.5% in CRI. All indicator loadings exceeded 0.70, confirming strong indicator reliability for each construct.

## 5. DISCUSSIONS

This study advances our knowledge of how customer perceived value affects legitimacy, which in turn influences customers' desires to revisit FFRs. Results in this study approve that the model was appropriate for describing the importance of CPV and the catalytic roles of pragmatic and social legitimacy in intermediating the relationships between CPV and customers' revisit intentions. Similar to prior studies on CPV and legitimacy (e.g. Sánchez-del-Río-Vázquez et al., 2025), the current findings reveal that customers' perceptions of value are major determinants of legitimacy. While CPV has significant positive effect on social legitimacy ( $p < 0.001$ ), its influence on pragmatic legitimacy is considerably insignificant ( $p > 0.001$ ) and this result negates earlier findings by Sánchez-del-Río-Vázquez et al. (2025) who found directly opposed results. While the former study was conducted in the retail sector, the later was pursued in the FFR sector and this difference in results could be attributed to the fact that in FFR the basic product and related services which appeal to the pragmatic aspects of the entire FFR service offering tend to be similar across all service providers and as such customers view them as basic requirements which cannot invoke perceptions of value that can induce PL among them, unlike the socio- norm based values.

The obtaining results concerning legitimacy and revisit intention are in synch with those of extant studies. PL was found to predict customer repatronage intention (RI), echoing Ailawadi et al.'s (2013) findings. More so, this study consistently augments findings by Guo et al. (2017) which resolved that SL positively predicted revisit intention (RI). Drawing from these empirical results, it is imperative to note that customers' granting of SL to FFRs is expressly revealed through positive behaviours such as revisit intention (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001).

### 5.1 Managerial and theoretical implications

Although Dhasan and Aryupong (2019) alluded that customers' perceptions of value are tri-dimensional (i.e., product-based, service-d and price fairness-based), managers of FFRs should strive to focus attention beyond creating value for money and emphasise on value driven actions because in this perfectly competitive FFR business, satisfactory product quality and fairness of price are no longer adequate to influence positively customers' perceptions of value towards granting FFRs pragmatic legitimacy. This is so, because customers prefer practical benefits over abstract value perceptions. Hence managers should emphasise on transforming value into concrete customer benefits such as offering timeous services, reliable order processing and locational convenience and operating hours.

More so, since pragmatic legitimacy is dependent on self-interest and usefulness, FFR managers' primary concerns should be on determining how best they can address customer needs. For instance, actively collecting and acting instantaneously on customer feedback, designing custom- driven menus that appeal

to local desires as well as establishing effective complaint-handling procedures. Besides, managers need to be cognisant of the fact that the insignificant relationship between CPV and PL reflects that customers least associate perceived value with legitimacy and should therefore revitalise their strategies aimed at communicating value to the customers. Thus, FFR managers must communicate clearly how their products satisfy customer needs and emphasise convenience, speed, and accessibility in their marketing messages because their value propositions need to be felt and understood by customers to matter. Since legitimacy (both PL and SL) strongly drives revisit intentions FFR managers are implored to actively build and communicate legitimacy through encouraging ethical conduct, trust, consistency and engagement in socio- norm based actions that elicit repeat patronage.

Theoretically, this study advances theory by placing legitimacy within the realm the FFR context, thereby seeking to address concerns for greater conceptual diversity in hospitality and consumer behaviour research. By proving that legitimacy (PL and SL) is a strong determinant of revisit intentions, the study reconceptualises repeat usage as an institutionally and socially driven behaviour rather than a completely utilitarian decision. Furthermore, the scope of the hospitality literature is widened by proffering an integrated framework that aligns institutional valuations with customer behavioural outcomes, thereby creating new theoretical pathways for comprehending customer– organisation linkages in food service contexts.

## 5.2 Limitations and further study

The study was premised on selected fast-food restaurants in South African citifies. Future research can be conducted which incorporates FFRs across the national divide using similar variables to ensure national representation for generalisability of results. Besides, studies can be done in other service sectors to test the model's fit. Moreover, since the study was conducted with a myopic national flair, further broadened studies could obtain international data to find out whether the relationship between CPV, legitimacy and revisit intention differs across cultures. More so, while this study focused on CPV in relation to only two legitimacy constructs (i.e., PL and SL) and RI, the relationship between CPV and other dimensions of legitimacy i.e. cognitive legitimacy and RI could be studied to reinforce the evidence obtained.

## DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

The authors declare that they do not have any competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have had influence the work reported in this paper.

### DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI AND AI-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WRITING PROCESS

The authors declare that they did not use any Generative AI and/or AI-Assisted technologies to prepare this article.

### COPYRIGHT AND LICENSING

© 2026 BEMAN. This is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/) (CC BY-NC 4.0). Authors have transferred copyright to BEMAN. The CC BY-NC license permits non-commercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution, and reproduction, provided the original work is properly cited.

### REFERENCES

- Ailawadi, K. L., Neslin, S. A., Luan, Y. J., & Taylor, G. A. (2013). Does retailer CSR enhance behavioural loyalty? A case for benefit segmentation. *International Journal of Research Marketing*, 31(2), 156–167. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2013.09.003>
- Amani, D. (2024). Is ethical packaging the right way to go? The impact of green packaging on consumer legitimacy in cosmetics industry. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 10(1), 2319375. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2024.2319375>
- Berry, L. L. (1988). SERVQUAL: A multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality. *Journal of Retailing*, 64(1), 12-40.
- Berthod, O. (2018). Institutional theory of organizations. In A. Farazmand (Ed.), *Global encyclopedia of public administration, public policy, and governance* (pp. 1–5). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-31816-5\\_63-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-31816-5_63-1)
- Blanco-González, A., Del-Castillo-Feito, C., & Miotto, G. (2021). The influence of business ethics and community outreach on faculty engagement: The mediating effect of legitimacy in higher education. *European Journal of Management and Business Economics*, 30(3), 281–298. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ejmbe-07-2020-0182>
- Briones-Peñalver, A. J., Bernal-Conesa, J. A., & de Nieves-Nieto, C. (2018). Analysis of corporate social responsibility in Spanish agribusiness and its influence on innovation and performance. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 25(2), 182-193. <https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.1448>
- Cachón-Rodríguez, G., Blanco-González, A., Prado-Román, C., & Díez-Martin, F. (2021). Sustainability actions, employee loyalty, and the awareness: The mediating effect of organization legitimacy. *Managerial and Decision Economics*, 42(7), 1730-1739, <https://doi.org/10.1002/mde.3340>
- Chen, P. T., & Hu, H. H. (2010). How determinant attributes of service quality influence customer-perceived value: An empirical investigation of the Australian coffee outlet industry. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 22(4), 535–551. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09596111011042730>
- Chun, S., & Nyam-Ochir, A. (2020). The effects of fast food restaurant attributes on customer satisfaction, revisit intention, and recommendation using DINESERV scale. *Sustainability*, 12(18), 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12187435>.

- Cronin, J. J., Brady, M. K., & Hult, G. T. (2000). Assessing the effects of quality, value and customer satisfaction on consumer behavioral intentions in service environments. *Journal of Retailing*, 76, 193-218. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-4359\(00\)00028-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-4359(00)00028-2)
- Deephouse, D. L., Bundy, J., Tost, L. P., & Suchman, M. C. (2017). Organisational legitimacy: Six key questions. In *The SAGE Handbook of Organisational Institutionalism*, 4, 27–54. Sage Publications.
- Dhasan, D., & Aryupong, M. (2019). Effects of product quality, service quality and price fairness on customer engagement and customer loyalty. *ABAC Journal*, 39(2). Retrieved February 23, 2026 from <http://www.assumptionjournal.au.edu/index.php/abacjournal/article/view/3959>.
- Díez-Martín, F., Blanco-Gonzalez, A., & Díez-de-Castro, E. (2021). Measuring a scientifically multifaceted concept. The jungle of organisational legitimacy. *European Research on Management and Business Economics*, 27(1), 100131. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iedeen.2020.10.001>
- Díez-Martín, F., Miotto, G., & Cachon-Rodríguez, G. (2022). Organisational legitimacy perception: Gender and uncertainty as bias for evaluation criteria. *Journal of Business Research*, 139, 426–436. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JBUSRES.2021.09.073>
- DiMaggio, P. (1988). Interest and agency in institutional theory. In L. G. Zucker (Ed.), *Research on institutional patterns: Environment and culture* (pp. 3–21). Ballinger Publishing Co.
- Femina, E. P., & Santhi, P. (2024). Effects of perceived value dimensions on customer brand loyalty towards luxury cars. *Rajagiri Management Journal*, 18(4), 274–286. <https://doi.org/10.1108/RAMJ-01-2024-0006>
- Firdaus, M. F., & Surianto, M. A. (2024). Service quality analysis at Carwash 99 Garage. *Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen Kesatuan*, 12(6), 2687-2696. <https://doi.org/10.37641/jimkes.v12i6.2961>
- Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18, 39-50. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3151312>
- García-Salirrosas, E. E., Escobar-Farfán, M., Esponda-Perez, J. A., Millones-Liza, D. Y., Villar-Guevara, M., Haro-Zea, K. L., & Gallardo-Canales, R. (2024). The impact of perceived value on brand image and loyalty: A study of healthy food brands in emerging markets. *Frontiers in Nutrition*, 11, 1482009. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnut.2024.1482009>
- Greenwood, R., Meyer, R. E., Lawrence, T. B., & Oliver, C. (2017). *The Sage Handbook of Organizational Institutionalism*. Sage.
- Guo, R., Tao, L., Bingxin, C., & Tao, W. (2017). A path analysis of greenwashing in a trust crisis among Chinese energy companies: The role of brand legitimacy and brand loyalty. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 140(3), 523–536. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-015-2672-7>
- Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2022). *A Primer on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)* (3rd ed.). Sage. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-80519-7>
- Hair, J. F., Risher, J. J., Sarstedt, M. & Ringle, C. M. (2019). When to use and how to report the results of PLS-SEM. *European Business Review*, 31, 2-24. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EBR-11-2018-0203>
- Han, H., Hsu, L. J., Lee, J., & Sheu, C. (2011). Are lodging customers ready to go green? An examination of attitudes, demographics, and ecofriendly intentions. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 30(2), 345–355. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2010.07.008>

- Han, H., & Ryu, K. (2009). The roles of the physical environment, price perception, and customer satisfaction in determining customer loyalty in the restaurant industry. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 33, 487-510. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1096348009344212>
- Islam, S., Zahin, M., & Rahim, S. B. (2024). Investigating how consumer-perceived value and store image influence brand loyalty in emerging markets. *South Asian Journal of Business Studies*, 13(4), 505–526. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SAJBS-04-2023-0097>
- Kim, J., & Ha, S. (2020). Effects of corporate social responsibility and performative actions on retailer legitimacy and consumer loyalty. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 12(3), 41-51. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijms.v12n3p41>
- Kotler, P., & Keller. K.L. (2008). *Marketing Management*. Thirteenth Edition. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Kusumawati, A., & Sri Rahayu, K. (2020). The effect of experience quality on customer perceived value and customer satisfaction and its impact on customer loyalty. *Human Systems Management*, 39(2), 219-232. <https://doi.org/10.3233/hsm-190564>
- Leroi-Werelds, S. (2019). An update on customer value: State of the art, revised typology, and research agenda. *Journal of Service Management*, 30(5), 650– 680. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOSM-03-2019-0074>
- Manyangara, S. E., Makanyeza, C., & Muranda, Z. (2023). The effect of service quality on revisit intention: The mediating role of destination image. *Cogent Business & Management*, 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2023.2250264>Page 2 of 15
- Meyer, J. W., & Scott, W. R. (1992). Organizational environments: Ritual and rationality. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 30, 295. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002087288602900312>
- Miotto, G., Del-Castillo-Feito, C., & Blanco-Gonzalez, A. (2020). Reputation and legitimacy: Key factors for higher education institutions' sustained competitive advantage. *Journal of Business Research*, 112, 342–353. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.11.076>
- Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V., & Berry, L. (1988) SERVQUAL: A multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality. *Journal of Retailing*, 12-40.
- Payne, G., Blanco-Gonzalez, A., Miotto, G., & Del-Castillo, C. (2021). Consumer Ethicality Perception and Legitimacy: Competitive advantages in COVID-19 crisis. *American Behavioral Scientist*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00027642211016515>
- Pranadetha, A., Hanoum, S., & Noer, L. R. (2025). Analysis of the influence of customer perceived values, customer engagement, and customer satisfaction on customer loyalty. *Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen Kesatuan*, 13 (1), 531-540. <https://doi.org/10.37641/jimkes.v13i1.3088>
- Ringle, C. M., Wende, S., & Becker, J. M. (2022). SmartPLS 4 [Computer software]. Retrieved from <http://www.smartpls.com>
- Ryu, K., Han, H., & Kim, T. H. (2008). The relationships among overall Quick-Casual Restaurant image, perceived value, customer satisfaction and behavioural intentions. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 27, 459-469. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2007.11.001>
- Sánchez-del-Río-Vázquez, M. E., Rodríguez-Rad, C., Orta-Pérez, M., & Revilla- Camacho, M. Á. (2025). Influence of perceived legitimacy and perceived value of professional association members on attitudinal loyalty. *Administrative Sciences*, 15(1), 1-23. <https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci15010004>
- Scott, R. W. (1987). The adolescence of institutional theory. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 32, 493–511. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2392880>

- Sen, S. & Bhattacharya, C. B. (2001). Does doing good always lead to doing better? Consumer reactions to corporate social responsibility. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 38, 225-243. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkr.38.2.225.18838>
- Slack N., Singh, G., Ali, J., Lata, R., Mudaliar, K., & Swamy, Y. (2020). Influence of fast-food restaurant quality and its dimensions on customer perceived value, satisfaction and behavioural intentions. *British Food Journal*, 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-09-2020-077>
- Stangl, B., Kastner, M., & Prayag, G. (2017). Pay-what-you-want for high-value priced services: Differences between potential, new, and repeat customers. *Journal of Business Research*, 74, 168–174. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.10.030>
- Suchman, M. C. (1995). Managing legitimacy: Strategic and institutional approaches. *Academy of Management Review*, 20(3), 571–610. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1995.9508080331>
- Sweeney, J. C., & Soutar, G. N. (2001). Consumer perceived value: The development of a multiple item scale. *Journal of Retailing*, 77(2), 203–220. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0022-4359\(01\)00041-0](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0022-4359(01)00041-0)
- Tuncer, I., Unusan, C., & Cobanoğlu, C. (2020). Service quality, perceived value and customer satisfaction on behavioural intention in restaurants: An integrated structural model. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 22(4), 447–475. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1528008X.2020.1802390>
- Valor, C., Lloveras, J., & Papaioannidou, E. (2021). The role of emotion discourse and pathic stigma in the delegitimization of consumer practices. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 47(5), 636–653. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucaa028>
- Walsh, M. F., Page Winterich, K., & Mittal, V. (2010). Do logo redesigns help or hurt your brand? The role of brand commitment. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 19(2), 76–84. <https://doi.org/10.1108/10610421011033421>
- Yang, K., Kim, J., Min, J., & Hernandez-Calderon, A. (2021). Effects of retailers' service quality and legitimacy on behavioral intention: The role of emotions during COVID-19. *The Service Industries Journal*, 41(1–2), 84–106. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02642069.2020.1863373>
- Zauner, A., Koller, M., & Hatak, I. (2015). Customer perceived value— Conceptualization and avenues for future research. *Cogent Psychology*, 2(1), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311908.2015.1061782>
- Zeithaml, V. A. (1988). Consumer perceptions of price, quality, and value: A means-end model and synthesis of evidence. *Journal of Marketing*, 52, 2–22. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/1251446>
- Zhang, X. A., & Borden, J. (2024). How legitimate are corporate social advocacy campaigns? An examination of the role of legitimacy in stakeholder perceptions of CSA. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 30(1), 123–147. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2022.2105931>