

## IMPROVING VISITOR AWARENESS THROUGH MARKETING LITERACY DURING RIYADH SEASON EVENTS

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**Abstract:** The study aimed to measure the impact of marketing literacy on the awareness of Riyadh Season visitors regarding deception and commercial fraud at a 0.05 significance level. The independent variable is marketing literacy, while the dependent variable, visitors' awareness, consists of three sub-variables: skills, knowledge, and situations. The population for this study includes all visitors to Riyadh Season 2025, which is expected to reach 16 million people. Data were collected using a purposive sampling technique, resulting in a sample size of 386 non-Saudi visitors. A five-point Likert scale was employed for the assessment. The results indicated that visitors' awareness is significantly influenced by marketing situations, more so than by marketing skills and knowledge. The study found that both pre-marketing and post-marketing conditions during the Riyadh Season have a strong impact on visitors' awareness of negative practices. Finally, the study offers several recommendations to enhance awareness among visitors, including educational market visits, strengthening supervision by authorities, activating the role of the Consumer Protection Association, and establishing a tourism court.

**Key Words:** Marketing, Awareness, Literacy, Knowledge, Skills, Behaviors, Visitors, Riyadh Season.

### 1. Introduction:

Illiteracy is a significant obstacle to economic growth and human development in many countries worldwide. The primary factor contributing to this issue is the increasing population size. As of 2025, the global literacy rate is approximately 86.3%, which means that around 13.7% of the population aged 15 and older is illiterate (UNESCO, 2004). Illiteracy is both a social and economic challenge. Its effects differ depending on the country. On a macroeconomic level, high illiteracy rates diminish a country's ability to address economic, health, environmental, and technological advancements. Furthermore, there is a strong positive correlation between literacy and economic growth. From an individual standpoint, illiteracy leads to economic recession and poor living conditions for those affected. It contributes to poverty, ignorance, and health issues, perpetuating a cycle of backwardness within communities. This cycle reinforces the relationship between poverty and unemployment (Pegkas, 2014).

The illiteracy discussed in our study goes beyond the basic inability to read and write; it relates more to how learners (or those who are not illiterate) acquire the necessary skills that enhance their everyday routines. Literacy is a vital component in the process of learning and knowledge acquisition. Research indicates that 70% of information is conveyed to individuals through reading. This statistic highlights that reading skills significantly enhance capabilities and improve overall knowledge (Kim et al., 2021). From a marketing perspective, a "literate"

individual can develop and improve their marketing knowledge and practices (Mueen et al., 2024). Other studies have introduced the concept of a "smart consumer," which refers to a consumer's understanding of marketing elements and incentives that elevate their thinking and awareness. This awareness helps consumers maximize personal benefits and allows them to share their accumulated knowledge with others, such as traders, markets, and fellow consumers. Moreover, the primary goal of consumers' perception is to optimize returns and enhance their understanding of essential information needed to become a smart consumer (www.ebay.com, 2025). For instance, the frequency of purchases and the number of visits to stores can enhance a consumer's ability to recall prices, suggesting that increased price knowledge is also likely (Anushree et al., 2021).

A study has revealed that sellers have increased prices by 20% without Saudi consumers' awareness, primarily due to a lack of consumer awareness. Commercial fraud in the Kingdom amounts to \$1 billion annually, attributed to a lack of market transparency and insufficient information. At the sector level, commercial fraud affects 70% of medicines, 19% of software, and 25% of car spare parts. Additionally, figures indicate that 56% of goods traded in the local market are not original, and 20% of the Saudi population is vulnerable to commercial fraud. The research underscores the significant role that media play in enhancing consumer literacy education (Livingstone, 2010). It highlights the power of media to promote positive messages within local communities, helping to protect them from fraud and exploitation while ensuring consumer protection at points of sale. There is a pressing need for greater transparency in delivering precautionary information by business centers and for improved accountability as well. Therefore, marketing literacy in the media is crucial, as it empowers consumers to make rational choices, maximize the benefits of their purchases, and avoid marketing deception.

## **2. The Literature Review:**

### **2.1 Marketing Literacy:**

Literacy refers to the coding skills individuals use in their daily routines, particularly in the context of purchasing behavior. This means that a learner possesses a specific set of skills that enables them to make buying decisions efficiently and effectively, regardless of the time or place (Chanda et al., 2024). It encompasses the ability to navigate market negotiations and understand various messages within the market (Siagian et al., 2024). These competencies allow consumers to engage as learners in different situations, utilizing their coding skills to complete transactions and make deals (Ng et al., 2023). Literacy is also dependent on the consumer's ability to create and comprehend readable texts, which is essential for completing tasks related to purchasing behavior in the marketplace. Moreover, this knowledge reflects general behavior and is not confined to a specific category. Consequently, individuals with less education may need to exert additional time and effort during the search and evaluation stages for products they require (Utkarsh, 2017).

Marketing literacy involves developing and understanding the knowledge, skills, and trust that shoppers need to enhance their evaluation processes, along with a comprehension of their rights and responsibilities. Essentially, literacy in this context is about seeking important information, consulting resources, receiving assistance, and making decisions based on the information gathered. The primary objectives are to enhance consumer protection, clarify consumer duties, promote interactive behaviors, and help avoid poor choices and behaviors resulting from incorrect purchases (Bruce, 2017). Local governments play a crucial role in

emphasizing consumers' rights and responsibilities by utilizing various media channels, including publications, websites, advertisements, and campaigns. Marketing awareness relies on employing the right tools to analyze consumer preferences and needs while linking these insights with financial benefits and product attributes. This approach can help reduce perceived risks associated with negative purchasing behaviors and foster a culture of complaints among consumers (Melewar et al., 2013).

There are numerous literacy programs in media-assisted schools designed for university students and adolescents to enhance their critical thinking skills, particularly in analyzing advertising messages (Tommasi et al., 2023). The adolescent market has been growing rapidly with 7% annually (Dinesh & 2Divyabharathi, 2023), and becoming one of the most targeted segments, with approximately 127.3 billion in 2025 (Market Research Report, 2025). American studies indicate that this demographic differs from others, as they primarily consider computers to be their main source of literacy. They have a tendency toward travel and entertainment and are increasingly interested in social and environmental issues. This emphasizes the urgent need to find effective ways to communicate, educate, and positively influence their behavior, particularly through internet platforms (Papplaro, 2012; Benjamin et al., 2018). The annual shopping rate for adolescents has surged, increasing 54 times, while their average visit duration has reached 95 minutes. In contrast, other groups average 39 visits and spend about 75 minutes per visit (Al-Nsour, 2018). These statistics reveal that friends and parents, along with advertising and television, are key sources of information for adolescents (Al-Nsour, 2018).

The study conducted by East, Hammond, Lomaxa, and Robinson (2005) demonstrated that word-of-mouth (WOM) significantly contributes to increased sales. They noted that WOM particularly influences male adolescents and individuals in the 20-30 age range. Rather than merely serving as a means of transferring information, WOM acts as a powerful tool that stimulates purchasing decisions (Al-Nsour, 2017). Consequently, recommendations from friends and relatives have a strong impact on consumers' purchasing choices. This finding is supported by the research of Krol (1997) and Shim (1996). Additionally, statistics show that 21% of both male and female adolescents view university courses as a valuable source of consumer literacy, with many benefiting positively from these courses (Furlow, 2008). In contrast, only 13% of Saudi students have enrolled in at least one course related to marketing and consumer protection (Ministry of Education, 2022).

Research shows that economic conditions and the ideological backgrounds of individuals play a key role in social awareness, while the media has a limited impact on building such awareness within communities (Happer & Philo, 2013). For instance, students' political awareness is often quite narrow, despite the political programs offered by the media. This finding is attributed to several factors, including a lack of programs designed to engage young people, low readership rates of newspapers and magazines, and a general disinterest in political issues among newspaper readers (Huang, 2009). Hussein (2001) indicates that social awareness reflects the unique characteristics of Egyptian society, and television often creates contradictory awareness. While television can support positive values associated with awareness, it sometimes also promotes negative behaviors (Iftikhar et al., 2022).

Research focusing on Media Literacy Education (Livingstone, 2010) demonstrates that media significantly influence the dissemination of positive information to local communities. Such information helps protect consumers from fraud and commercialism, particularly at points of sale. Furthermore, transparency in delivering precautionary information from business centers

enhances the concept of accountability. In Jordan, for instance, television serves as a major source of accurate health information and is an effective tool for promoting health awareness (Safari et al., 2023).

## **2.2 Marketing Literacy and Visitors' Awareness:**

Consumer protection aims to enhance market efficiency and create fairer, more harmonized market practices. It strengthens the role of consumers by imposing greater control and oversight over their daily routines and purchasing decisions. This makes consumer protection a coherent, systematic, organized, comprehensive, and sequential process aimed at educating and empowering customers. The goal is to help them develop their marketing and purchasing skills, leading to increased security, transparency, and efficiency in physical markets, while effectively meeting their needs (Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, 2014). The core concept of consumer protection is to improve the quality of life in the marketplace by fostering healthy relationships and interactions between consumers and various sellers, producers, and organizations. This allows consumers to obtain goods and services with minimal effort, while making more informed and accurate decisions (Al-Nsour, 2021).

Achieving such a goal requires a high level of commitment from sellers, producers, and organizers to their responsibilities and working conditions, which ensure consumer rights. This commitment is essential to prevent deception and fraud. Studies indicate that the lack of effective consumer protection is widespread and varies with technological advancements, information revolutions, and globalization, all of which significantly impact marketing practices across different individuals and societies. For instance, a study found that 3.2 million adolescent consumers in Britain experienced commercial fraud through phone calls and emails, resulting in annual costs exceeding £3.5 billion (Bowe, 2007). Recent consumer protection research suggests that individuals are increasingly leaning towards professionalism and the need for greater self-responsibility, rather than relying solely on organizations and institutions (Bowe, 2007). Educated consumers are better equipped to protect themselves and their families from issues related to the marketing environment, as well as commercial fraud and deception.

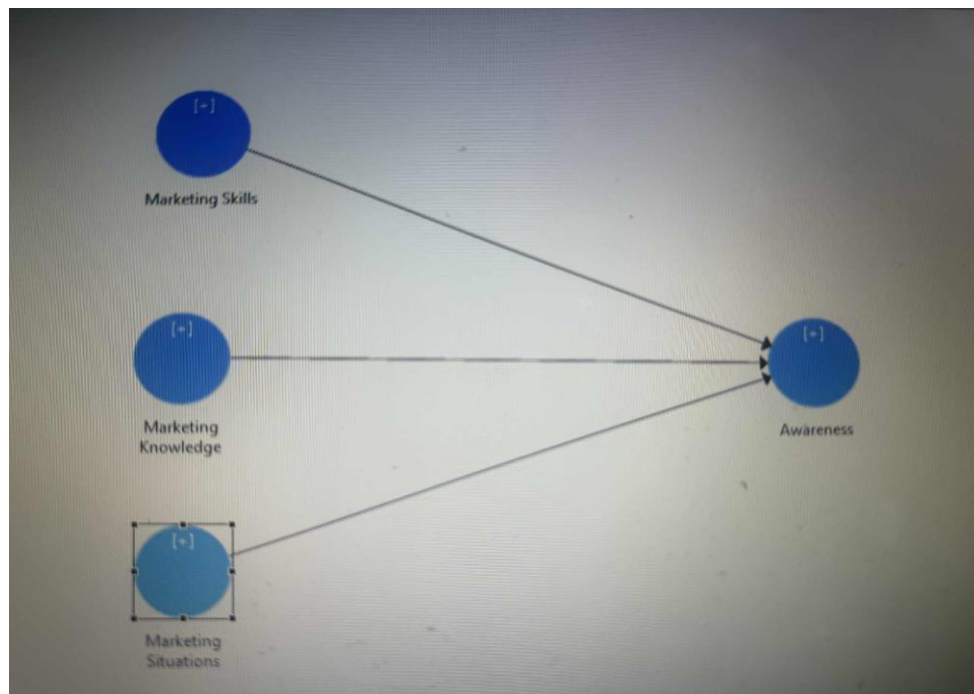
Many attempts have been made to establish a foundation for managing marketing and sales forces, as well as to identify the mechanisms, methods, and techniques that should be utilized. Attention has also been given to less educated groups, particularly older individuals (Hobbs, 2010). As a result, marketing illiteracy among older people in the UK decreased to less than 20% in 2006, indicating an improved ability to recognize and engage with appropriate marketing practices. Additionally, studies highlight that businesses have a strong interest in adolescent-oriented marketing, often perceiving this demographic as less experienced consumer who require more time and effort to become savvy purchasers (Furlow, 2008). Furthermore, females and low-income individuals typically have lower levels of education and experience in this area. In contrast, the most educated and high-income groups, particularly married individuals, demonstrate the highest levels of marketing literacy. This suggests that other demographics still need to develop the necessary skills to protect themselves against deceptive practices in the market. In conclusion, various media platforms have played a crucial role in safeguarding consumers. This protection is achieved by educating individuals on their rights, duties, and interests while advocating for these rights. Such initiatives are classified under social issues and responsibilities, with media programs aimed at addressing and understanding the sensitive issues within local communities. The goal is to enhance consumer literacy, making them more aware of their rights, obligations, responsibilities, and duties.

The results of the survey indicated that English is a second language for about 11 million Americans, with over 20% of this population being functionally illiterate. These individuals possess skills comparable to those of someone below the fourth-grade level in reading, basic math, document comprehension, and awareness. Additionally, 34% of the learners were classified as marginally literate, existing at the boundary between illiteracy and literacy. This classification is based on their ability to gather information and interpret simple symbols from readable texts (Al-Nsour,2017). The National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), which assessed 13,600 Americans, revealed that more than 50% performed below the sixth-grade level on cognitive competence tests (Kirsch et al., 2002).In conclusion, the data suggest a connection between cognitive abilities and the population's capacity to meet their purchasing needs. A low level of knowledge can lead to negative market practices (Appiah et al., 2022).Additionally, consumers with lower cognitive levels often select inappropriate or unsuitable products, indicating a struggle to comprehend available pricing information. Those with less education typically have less experience and face challenges in making successful and accurate transactions (Yogesh et al., 2023). Such consumers frequently rely on external sources—such as product information, advertisements, and packaging—to help them make successful purchases (Pan, 2024). Yongqing et al (2020) argued that it is challenging for these consumers to identify their needs, estimate product values, and navigate the physical marketplace.A study conducted by Huang (2022) revealed that less-educated consumers tend to seek out more information about products compared to their university-educated counterparts. Additionally, Jiyoung & Merlyn (2017) noted that less-informed consumers often view themselves as more intelligent and practical, believing that educated consumers primarily read textbooks. The research addresses and critiques the perception that less-educated consumers are victims of circumstance. This notion is portrayed as a form of ideological distortion that diminishes the value of individuals from poorer and less-educated backgrounds (Craig,2009).Understanding awareness and knowledge of marketing literacy is essential to improving engagement and communication strategies. The results of Tuohy et al., (2022) indicates that there are gaps in awareness and knowledge among NMP visitors, as current engagement and communication strategies do not reach the goals outlined in the NMP management plan. While the majority of visitors were aware of the presence of a marine park in the area, they showed low levels of awareness of the underlying management bodies (Tuohy et al., 2022). According to above the main hypothesis may formulated as follow:

- ***It is Expected to be a Statistical Significance of Marketing Literacy on Awareness of Riyadh Season Visitors from Deception and Commercial Fraud at the 0.05 Level***

The following figure represents the model used in this study. It aims at determining the direction of the relationship between independent and dependent variables.





### 3. The Research Design:

- A. The Research Population: The population consists of all consumers and residents living in Riyadh city, Saudi Arabia. According to the General Entertainment Authority, the number of visitors to the Riyadh Season in 2025 reached 16 million, with attendees from various nationalities(General Entertainment Authority,2025).
- B. The Sampling Technique and Size:For the sampling technique, data was collected using purposive sampling. The sample comprised 386 non-Saudi visitors attending the Riyadh Season in 2025, all of whom were over the age of 30. A total of 341 valid responses were received for final analysis. The unit of analysis includes visitors aged 30 and older.
- C. Measurement: A five-point Likert scale was used to capture the degree of response and the consistency between the statements and the respondents' opinions. In this scale, a value of 5 corresponds to "always," 4 to "often," 3 to "sometimes," 2 to "rarely," and 1 to "never." To analyze the research sample results, descriptive statistical analysis was conducted, calculating the arithmetic mean, standard deviation, and relative frequency. The components of marketing literacy were evaluated based on the arithmetic mean of the research sample. The evaluation criteria are as follows: a mean of more than 4.2 is categorized as very high; a mean from 4.2 to 3.4 is considered high; a mean from 3.4 to 2.6 is average (or moderate); a mean from 2.6 to 1.8 is regarded as weak; and any mean below 1.8 is categorized as very weak.

### D. File of Respondents:

- 1) **Marketing Skills:** A study revealed six key marketing skills among consumers in Saudi Arabia. The findings indicate that these skills are generally rated highly, suggesting a strong level of marketing proficiency among the population. Specifically, 58.3% of respondents reported having a high degree of marketing skills, while 33.6% indicated that their skills were low.

**Table 1:** *Frequencies, Percentages, Means, and Standard Deviations of Sub-Independent Variable (Marketing Skills)*

| N | The Items  | F | Responses Degree |          |          |          |          | Mean       | SD          | Decision |
|---|--|---|------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|------------|-------------|----------|
|   |  |   | VH               | H        | N        | L        | VL       |            |             |          |
| 1 | I can distinguish between similar products based on their quality.                                 | % | 22.<br>2         | 38.<br>2 | 20.<br>8 | 16       | 2.8      | 3.616<br>1 | 1.086<br>51 | High     |
| 2 | I can distinguish between similar products according to price.                                     | % | 23.<br>1         | 34.<br>9 | 22.<br>6 | 15.<br>1 | 4.2      | 3.582<br>9 | 1.123<br>98 | High     |
| 3 | I can differentiate between the brands purchased.  | % | 25.<br>9         | 28.<br>8 | 20.<br>8 | 15.<br>6 | 9        | 3.459<br>7 | 1.269<br>43 | High     |
| 4 | I can distinguish between products purchased based on their country of origin.                     | % | 24.<br>5         | 28.<br>8 | 20.<br>3 | 18.<br>4 | 8        | 3.431<br>3 | 1.260<br>68 | High     |
| 5 | I can differentiate between the different uses of the products purchased.                          | % | 25.<br>9         | 32.<br>5 | 22.<br>2 | 15.<br>6 | 3.8      | 3.606<br>6 | 1.138<br>82 | High     |
| 6 | I can distinguish the physical specifications of the products purchased, such as colors and shape. | % | 34.<br>9         | 30.<br>2 | 17.<br>5 | 14.<br>6 | 2.8      | 3.796<br>2 | 1.146<br>92 | High     |
|   | Overall the Dimension  | % | 26.<br>1         | 32.<br>2 | 17.<br>4 | 15.<br>9 | 13.<br>7 | 3.582<br>1 | 0.762<br>44 | High     |

- 2) Marketing Knowledge:** The assessment of marketing knowledge includes six components. Of these, five were rated as moderate, while the statement "I have information about consumers' rights in different purchasing situations" received a high rating. In Saudi Arabia, it was found that 39.7% of consumers possess the low marketing knowledge necessary for making effective purchasing decisions, whereas 35.5% have a high level of knowledge.

**Table 2:** *Frequencies, Percentages, Means, and Standard Deviations of Sub-Independent Variable (Marketing Knowledge)*

| N | The Item   | F | Responses Degree |          |          |          |          | Mean       | SD          | Decision |
|---|--|---|------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|------------|-------------|----------|
|   |  |   | VH               | H        | N        | L        | VL       |            |             |          |
| 1 | I have information about the consumers' rights in different purchasing situations. | % | 25.<br>9         | 37.<br>3 | 20.<br>3 | 10.<br>4 | 6.1      | 3.668<br>2 | 1.160<br>41 | High     |
| 2 | I have information about the duties of consumers in different marketing practices. | % | 5.2              | 17.<br>9 | 30.<br>7 | 25.<br>9 | 20.<br>3 | 2.620<br>9 | 1.162<br>24 | Moderate |
| 3 | I have known the key issues  | % | 7.1              | 19.      | 33.      | 27.      | 12.      | 2.805      | 1.114       | Moderate |

|   |   |   |      |      |      |      |      |               |                |          |
|---|---|---|------|------|------|------|------|---------------|----------------|----------|
|   | facing the consumer in different purchasing situations.                                 |   |      | 3    | 5    | 4    | 7    | 7             | 91             |          |
| 4 | I know the methods that should be used when problems occur during the purchase process. | % | 9.4  | 23.6 | 30.2 | 25.9 | 10.8 | 2.9479        | 1.14315        | Moderate |
| 5 | I know the consumer protection law in electronic purchasing transactions.               | % | 8.5  | 12.3 | 26.4 | 29.7 | 23.1 | 2.5403        | 1.21578        | Moderate |
| 6 | I know the parties responsible for marketing problems.                                  | % | 12.7 | 16   | 25.9 | 29.2 | 16   | 2.8009        | 1.26046        | Moderate |
|   | Overall the Dimension   | % | 11.5 | 21.1 | 27.8 | 24.7 | 14.9 | <b>2.8973</b> | <b>0.92767</b> | Moderate |

**3) Marketing Situations:** This variable focuses on behavioral situations and consists of 12 items. These items describe the actual practices of consumers in markets and stores during and after the purchasing process. The relative Likert scale indicates that these situations are moderated. It was found that 8 of the items were affected by moderation, while there was a notable lack of communication with consumer protection devices in problem situations, with 54.2% of respondents indicating this issue. Among the items, three stood out with significant responses: "I stop using the product in the event of any defect or mistake," "I share my positive experiences during the purchasing process with others," and "I share my negative experiences during the purchasing process with others."

**Table 3:** *Frequencies, Percentages, Means, and Standard Deviations of Sub-Independent Variable (Marketing Situations)*

| N | The Items  | F | Responses Degree |      |      |      |      | Mean | SD    | Decision |
|---|--|---|------------------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|----------|
|   |  |   | VH               | H    | N    | L    | VL   |      |       |          |
| 1 | I read the contracts and guarantees for the product before the purchase.     | % | 7.5              | 19.3 | 25   | 25.5 | 22.6 | 2.64 | 1.240 | Moderate |
| 2 | I keep the purchase invoice and all related documents.                       | % | 24.1             | 25.9 | 18.4 | 21.2 | 10.4 | 3.30 | 1.325 | Moderate |
| 3 | I compare weights, lengths, and sizes of the product when making a purchase. | % | 16.5             | 25.5 | 25.5 | 18.4 | 14.2 | 3.10 | 1.293 | Moderate |
| 4 | I stop using the product in the event of any defect or mistake.              | % | 35.8             | 25.5 | 16.5 | 17.5 | 4.7  | 3.71 | 1.253 | High     |
| 5 | I make sure that the prices are really discounted.                           | % | 21.2             | 29.7 | 21.7 | 15.6 | 11.8 | 3.33 | 1.296 | Moderate |
| 6 | I communicate with the consumer protection devices                           | % | 9.9              | 13.2 | 22.6 | 28.3 | 25.9 | 2.53 | 1.285 | Weak     |



|    |   |   |      |      |      |      |      |             |                |          |
|----|---|---|------|------|------|------|------|-------------|----------------|----------|
|    | in case of any problem.   |   |      |      |      |      |      |             |                |          |
| 7  | I check the safety and quality of the product during the purchasing process.        | % | 22.2 | 33.5 | 22.2 | 18.4 | 3.8  | 3.51        | 1.144          | Moderate |
| 8  | I inform the store's staff of comments, suggestions, and complaints when necessary. | % | 17   | 27.8 | 21.2 | 19.8 | 14.2 | 3.11        | 1.312          | Moderate |
| 9  | I tell others about my positive experiences during the purchase process.            | % | 25.9 | 36.8 | 17.5 | 13.2 | 6.6  | 3.62        | 1.195          | High     |
| 10 | I tell others about my bad experiences during the purchase process.                 | % | 25.5 | 38.7 | 17   | 11.8 | 7.1  | 3.63        | 1.190          | High     |
| 11 | I purchase in normal times (not fatigue or hunger).                                 | % | 19.8 | 34.4 | 24.5 | 15.1 | 6.1  | 3.46        | 1.151          | Moderate |
| 12 | I make the planned purchase (do not make an urgent purchase).                       | % | 12.3 | 30.2 | 26.4 | 20.8 | 10.4 | 3.12        | 1.180          | Moderate |
|    | Overall the Dimension   | % | 19.8 | 25.6 | 19.9 | 18.8 | 16   | <b>3.03</b> | <b>0.92931</b> | Moderate |

**4) Visitors' Awareness:** The level of consumer protection is against negative market practices. The results show that Visitors' protection practices are high according to the arithmetic mean (3.5813). It shows that the consumer's knowledge of most of his rights was a high, while the other three of rights were moderated: "the right to health and safety when using the products normally" according to 53%, "the right to get compensation in case of conciliation is damaged" according to 51.2% and "the right to obtain details dealing between the supplier and exporters" according to 38.7%.

**Table 4:** Frequencies, Percentages, Means, and Standard Deviations of Sub-Independent Variable (Visitors' Awareness)

| N | The Items   | F | Responses Degree |      |      |      |     | Mean | SD    | Decision |
|---|---|---|------------------|------|------|------|-----|------|-------|----------|
|   |   |   | VH               | H    | N    | L    | VL  |      |       |          |
| 1 | I know my right to health and safety when using the products normally.                    | % | 17.5             | 35.5 | 21.7 | 17.1 | 8.1 | 3.37 | 1.202 | Moderate |
| 2 | I have the right to obtain the correct information and data about the products purchased. | % | 26.3             | 30.4 | 23   | 15.7 | 4.6 | 3.55 | 1.171 | High     |
| 3 | I have the right to freely choose between products that meet the quality requirements.    | % | 35               | 31.3 | 14.3 | 12   | 7.4 | 3.72 | 1.278 | High     |

|    |  |   |      |      |      |      |      |               |               |          |
|----|--|---|------|------|------|------|------|---------------|---------------|----------|
| 4  | I have the right to personal dignity and respect for religious and cultural values.  | % | 49.8 | 26.3 | 7.8  | 11.5 | 4.6  |               |               | High     |
|    |  |   |      |      |      |      |      | 4.02          | 1.225         |          |
| 5  | I have the right to bring legal cases for injury and violation of my rights.   | % | 28.1 | 30   | 15.7 | 17.1 | 9.2  |               |               | High     |
|    |  |   |      |      |      |      |      | 3.54          | 1.299         |          |
| 6  | I have the right to get compensation in case of conciliation is damaged.   | % | 30   | 21.2 | 19.8 | 17.5 | 11.5 |               |               | Moderate |
|    |  |   |      |      |      |      |      | 3.37          | 1.376         |          |
| 7  | I have the right to get the documents, contracts, and invoices of the purchase.  | % | 41.9 | 26.3 | 14.7 | 12   | 5.1  |               |               | High     |
|    |  |   |      |      |      |      |      | 3.85          | 1.235         |          |
| 8  | I have the right to obtain details of dealings between the supplier and exporters.   | % | 18.4 | 20.3 | 18.4 | 24.4 | 18.4 |               |               | Moderate |
|    |  |   |      |      |      |      |      | 3.06          | 1.396         |          |
| 9  | I have the right to inform the government authorities about mistakes and abuses.   | % | 31.1 | 24   | 18.9 | 15.7 | 10.1 |               |               | High     |
|    |  |   |      |      |      |      |      | 3.50          | 1.350         |          |
| 10 | I have the right to get the full details of the purchase process in installments, such as price, period, total cost, and number of installments. | % | 39.2 | 28.6 | 15.7 | 12.4 | 4.1  |               |               | High     |
|    |  |   |      |      |      |      |      | 3.82          | 1.196         |          |
|    | Overall the Dimension  | % | 31.7 | 27.4 | 17   | 14.5 | 9.34 | <b>3.5813</b> | <b>1.2728</b> | High     |

#### 4. Validity and Reliability:

- 1) Discriminant Validity: This concept refers to how distinct measure statements are from one another, as well as the extent of overlap between them (Hair et al., 2018). It involves a cross-loading test, which requires that the loading value of each item in a latent variable (independent variable and dependent variable) must be the highest among all other variables (Hair et al., 2018). As shown in Table 5, the cross-loading values for each statement in the latent variables are distinct and exceed those of other variables. Therefore, these statements are considered to be distinct, indicating an optimal positioning.
- 2) Convergent Validity: This concept assesses the degree of agreement among several statements measuring the same concept within a variable (Ringle et al., 2024). It includes three tests:
  - A) Individual Item Validity: This test evaluates the consistency of responses to statements that assess the same phenomenon or concept. The acceptable benchmark for this measure is a value greater than 0.7. As indicated in Table 5, all statements exceed this threshold and are therefore statistically acceptable.
  - B) Composite Alpha: According to the statistical guideline, the acceptability of a latent variable (whether independent or dependent) should be greater than 0.7. Table 5 confirms that both the independent and dependent variables exceed this value (Hair et al., 2021).

- C) Average Variance Extracted (AVE): The minimum acceptable threshold for AVE is 0.5. Results show that all study variables exceed this benchmark, confirming their statistical acceptability (Ringle et al., 2024).
- D) rho\_A: The statistical guideline states that the test value should be higher than 0.7 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Results reveal that the peak test values for all variables are above 0.7, confirming that the constructs are reliable and acceptable for the present study.

Table 5: *Cross Loading, CR, AVE, CR & VIF*

| Factor               | Items | Cross Loading | CR    | AVE   | Rho_A |
|----------------------|-------|---------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Marketing Skills     | MS1   | 0.983         | 0.993 | 0.937 | 0.993 |
|                      | MS2   | 0.986         |       |       |       |
|                      | MS3   | 0.986         |       |       |       |
|                      | MS4   | 0.979         |       |       |       |
|                      | MS5   | 0.988         |       |       |       |
|                      | MS6   | 0.968         |       |       |       |
| Marketing Knowledge  | MK1   | 0.954         | 0.990 | 0.940 | 0.988 |
|                      | MK2   | 0.970         |       |       |       |
|                      | MK3   | 0.981         |       |       |       |
|                      | MK4   | 0.975         |       |       |       |
|                      | MK5   | 0.961         |       |       |       |
|                      | MK6   | 0.977         |       |       |       |
| Marketing Situations | MS1   | 0.959         | 0.995 | 0.938 | 0.994 |
|                      | MS2   | 0.979         |       |       |       |
|                      | MS3   | 0.974         |       |       |       |
|                      | MS4   | 0.959         |       |       |       |
|                      | MS5   | 0.980         |       |       |       |
|                      | MS6   | 0.950         |       |       |       |
|                      | MS7   | 0.972         |       |       |       |
|                      | MS8   | 0.976         |       |       |       |
|                      | MS9   | 0.966         |       |       |       |
|                      | MS10  | 0.967         |       |       |       |
|                      | MS11  | 0.973         |       |       |       |
|                      | MS12  | 0.965         |       |       |       |
| Visitor Awareness    | VA1   | 0.966         | 0.994 | 0.963 | 0.992 |
|                      | VA2   | 0.969         |       |       |       |
|                      | VA3   | 0.973         |       |       |       |
|                      | VA4   | 0.950         |       |       |       |
|                      | VA5   | 0.976         |       |       |       |
|                      | VA6   | 0.976         |       |       |       |
|                      | VA7   | 0.969         |       |       |       |
|                      | VA8   | 0.952         |       |       |       |
|                      | VA9   | 0.981         |       |       |       |
|                      | VA10  | 0.970         |       |       |       |

### 3) Fornell-Larcker Test:

The test shows that the value of the latent variable—regardless of whether it is independent or dependent—explains the highest level of variance when compared to other latent variables (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). As indicated in Table 6, the variance values for the latent variables are greater than those of the other variables. This suggests that there is no significant relationship with the other latent variables, implying that the current state of the variable is more favorable.

Table 6: *Fornell-Larcker Criterion*

| Construct            | Visitor Awareness | Marketing Skills | Marketing Knowledge | Marketing Situations |
|----------------------|-------------------|------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Visitor Awareness    | 0.968             |                  |                     |                      |
| Marketing Skills     | 0.959             | 0.970            |                     |                      |
| Marketing Knowledge  | 0.987             | 0.985            | 0.968               |                      |
| Marketing Situations | 0.988             | 0.969            | 0.987               | 0.981                |

## 5. Testing Hypothesis:

- *It is Expected to be a Statistical Significance of Marketing Literacy on Awareness of Riyadh Season Visitors from Deception and Commercial Fraud at the 0.05 Level*

### 5.1 Path Analysis:

The path analysis reveals that various marketing factors significantly influence the attraction of medical tourists to Jordan. According to Table 7, the statistical significance of three correlation relationships falls below the acceptable margin of error (0.05). This supports the sub-hypotheses related to marketing skills, marketing knowledge, and marketing situations. More specifically, there is a strong positive correlation between marketing situations (0.899) and marketing skills (0.494), as they relate to visitor awareness during the Riyadh Season regarding deception and commercial fraud. Conversely, there is a significant negative correlation between marketing knowledge (0.401) and visitor awareness during the Riyadh Season. Despite this, all sub-hypotheses were proven, indicating a high level of significance, and a strong effect was observed of marketing literacy on the awareness of Riyadh Season visitors concerning deception and commercial fraud. The  $f^2$  value is used to measure the effect of independent variables on dependent variables (Hair et al., 2021).

In this analysis,  $f^2$  assesses the impact of marketing literacy (in terms of skills, knowledge, and situations) on the awareness of Riyadh Season visitors regarding deception and commercial fraud. According to statistical guidelines, an  $f^2$  value above 0.35 indicates a high effect, while a value below 0.35 suggests a lower effect. As shown in Table 8, marketing literacy has a highly positive impact on the awareness of Riyadh Season visitors regarding deception and commercial fraud. Specifically, marketing situations show a high effect (0.748), while marketing skills and knowledge also have a high effect, though slightly less than marketing situations. The coefficient of determination,  $R^2$ , indicates the strength of the linear relationship between independent variables (IVs) and the dependent variable (DV) by measuring the variance in the DV caused by one or more IVs (Hair et al., 2018). According to statistical standards, an  $R^2$  value below 0.02 is considered very small, between 0.02 and 0.13 is moderate, and a value above 0.26 reflects high variance.

The  $R^2$  value in Table 8 shows that all components of marketing literacy (skills, knowledge, and situations) explain 98.7% of the variance in the awareness of Riyadh Season visitors regarding deception and commercial fraud. Notably, marketing situations have the strongest impact on visitor awareness. Finally, the predictive effectiveness of the model used in this study is evaluated through the predictive relevance  $Q^2$ . According to statistical guidelines, a model demonstrates predictive power if the  $Q^2$  value is greater than 0.00 (Chin, 2010). Table 8 indicates a significant ability to analyze the variance in the awareness of Riyadh Season visitors concerning deception and commercial fraud, with a  $Q^2$  value of 0.919. This suggests that the measurement model possesses strong predictive power to explain variations in the awareness of Riyadh Season visitors based on marketing literacy components.

Table 7: Direct Path Analysis

| <i>H</i>        | <i>Relationship</i>              | <i>Std. Beta</i> | <i>Std. Dev.</i> | <i>T-Value</i> | <i>P-Value</i> | $f^2$  | $R^2$ | $Q^2$ | <i>Decision</i>      |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|--------|-------|-------|----------------------|
| H <sub>11</sub> | Marketing Awareness → Skills     | 0.494            | 0.058            | 8.513          | 0.000          | 0.462  | 0.977 | 0.910 | High Positive Effect |
| H <sub>12</sub> | Marketing Awareness → Knowledge  | -0.401           | 0.060            | 6.615          | 0.000          | 0.357  | 0.921 | 0.856 | High Negative Effect |
| H <sub>13</sub> | Marketing Awareness → Situations | 0.899            | 0.090            | 9.825          | 0.189          | 0.748  | 0.987 | 0.908 | High Positive Effect |
| H <sub>15</sub> | Marketing Awareness → Literacy   | 0.986            | 0.002            | 455.9          | 0.002          | 35.451 | 0.987 | 0.919 | High Positive Effect |

Significant at  $P_0^* < 0.01$ . Significant at  $P_0^{**} < 0.05$ .

## 5.2 Goodness of Fit (GoF):

This text evaluates the predictive power and performance of both the measurement model and the structural model, as discussed by Chin and Dibbern (2010). According to statistical decision rules, a Goodness of Fit (GoF) value of less than 0.1 indicates that the model is unsuitable. A GoF value between 0.1 and 0.25 suggests limited suitability, while a GoF value ranging from 0.25 to 0.36 indicates average suitability. A GoF value greater than 0.36 signifies a high fit. Table No. 8 presents the indicators used to assess the suitability of the research model, as outlined by Ringle et al. (2024). The model fit indicators include:

- Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR): This metric measures the average magnitude of differences between saturated and predicted correlations, serving as an absolute measure of model fit. According to Henseler et al. (2014), an acceptable SRMR value should be less than 0.08, with values up to 0.10 being considered a good fit. The estimated model currently has an SRMR value of 0.018, indicating negligible differences between the saturated and expected values, which suggests that the model is highly suitable.
- d\_ULS and d\_G: These two indicators assess the model's suitability based on the differences between saturated and expected values. The d\_ULS represents the sum of the squares of the differences between values, while d\_G is the square root of that sum. For the estimated and saturated models, the d\_ULS values are both equal to 0.046, indicating a high model fit. Additionally, the d\_G values for both models are also equal to 1.759, confirming a very high degree of fit in the estimated model.



- Chi-Square: This statistic measures how well the model aligns with observed data. The Chi-Square values for both the estimated and saturated models are identical, indicating no discrepancies between the two models.
- NFI (Normed Fit Index): This index assesses how much the estimated model improves upon the saturated model. The NFI is calculated as 1 minus the squared Chi-Square value of the proposed model divided by the squared Chi-Square value of the empty model. The resulting values range from 0 to 1, with values closer to 1 indicating a better fit. An NFI value above 0.9 is generally considered a good fit. In this case, the NFI for both models is 0.836.

*Table 8: GOF Value*

| Variable   | Saturated Model | Estimated Model | Q <sup>2</sup> (=1-SSE/SSO) |
|------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| SRMR       | 0.018           | 0.018           | 0.919                       |
| d_ULS      | 0.046           | 0.046           |                             |
| d_G        | 1.759           | 1.759           |                             |
| Chi-Square | 766.488         | 766.488         |                             |
| NFI        | 0.836           | 0.836           |                             |

## 6. Discussion and Recommendations:

Visitors to the Riyadh Season in Saudi Arabia demonstrate a high level of marketing skills, which they use to assess the negative practices of stores and salespeople. Research shows that various forms of media, including the Internet, television, newspapers, and magazines, play a significant role in developing these skills. Around 48.8% of marketing skills are acquired by consumers through advertising. It is important to recognize that these media serve not only as sources of information but also as tools for gathering and developing new marketing skills. The consumption of reading and visual media is divided into 40.5% and 59%, respectively, which aligns with literature indicating that 70% of information is obtained through reading. This trend can be attributed to advancements in technology and the information revolution, characterized by the rise of tablets and smartphones that combine reading and viewing technologies with entertainment. When identifying the Internet as a source of reading, the percentage of information consumed through reading increases to 98.9%. The limited influence of educational institutions, consumer protection agencies, and government entities on shaping consumer marketing knowledge in Saudi Arabia may explain the overall weakness in this area, which can lead to poor purchasing decisions. The findings suggest that marketing knowledge is shaped not only by social influences but also by individual behavior. Consequently, less educated consumers may put in additional effort, time, and money into product checking and inspection, which can hurt this demographic. Literacy initiatives aimed at supporting local communities—such as schools, universities, students, and adolescents—are crucial for fostering critical thinking skills through reading and understanding messages (Yasdin et al., 2021). However, other research suggests that the media plays a limited role in raising awareness (Jianxiong & Zhou, 2021). For instance, despite the political programs provided by the media, students' political awareness remains very limited (Ahmad et al., 2019). Refea (2024) further points out that social awareness in Egypt reflects the unique characteristics of its society

Marketing skills can be effective in certain circumstances or markets, but maintaining that success consistently is challenging without the support of relevant knowledge. This knowledge helps consumers make informed and rational purchasing decisions over time. This trend is highlighted by the fact that 47.2% of purchasing decisions in Saudi Arabia are unplanned. Mahmud et al. (2022) confirmed that a savvy consumer can perform decision-making behaviors efficiently and effectively. Additionally, a study by Isnaini et al. (2025) suggests that literacy involves effectively applying skills and navigating social contexts to interpret various marketing messages. Consequently, marketing knowledge, as a component of marketing literacy, increases the likelihood of rational and informed purchasing decisions and helps reduce commercial deception by stores and sales personnel. Research indicates that consumers in Saudi Arabia often utilize their accumulated marketing skills in unexpected purchasing situations. Our study differentiates between subjective situations, which reflect consumers' heightened awareness of specific marketing issues such as health and safety rights, the right to compensation for damages, the right to conciliation, and the right to receive detailed information about deals. This subjective level illustrates what consumers experience at sales points during and after their purchasing decisions. There are moderate concerns, such as difficulties in reading contracts and product guarantees before making a purchase, as well as limited communication with consumer protection agencies. However, the Consumer Protection Association and academic institutions have played significant roles in informing consumers about these behaviors, accounting for 18.7% and 11.7%, respectively, of the efforts. Notably, only 4.8% of marketing information came from the Consumer Protection Association, while 2.08% was provided by universities.

Many visitors to the Riyadh Season in Saudi Arabia report negative experiences at selling points, which leads to a higher prevalence of negative word-of-mouth (WOM) in the Saudi market. This finding contradicts Al-Nsour's assertion (2018) that negative WOM is less likely to occur than positive WOM. We support the idea that distinguishing between different types of WOM serves as an informative tool, educating consumers about behaviors and marketing practices in their environment. This, in turn, can influence purchasing decisions. Thus, WOM functions as a mechanism that can either accelerate or delay the purchasing process, rather than simply facilitating information exchange among consumers (Bhardwaj et al., 2024). Research has shown that 32% of information is shared through parents, relatives, and friends, aligning with Kamil et al.'s findings (2020). Albadri (2022) reported that 26.7% of information is obtained via the internet, while 13.5% and 10.9% come from commercial television, newspapers, and magazines, respectively. These results are consistent with Calvert's (2008) findings, which indicate that primary sources of information for American consumers include friends, relatives, advertisements, and television. Al-Quran (2022) categorized these sources as friends, parents, print media, and commercial television. In Jordan, television is recognized as a key source of accurate information and is effective in spreading health awareness (Al-Dmour et al., 2022). Research on Media Literacy Education emphasizes the importance of positive messages in the local community, aiming to raise awareness among Riyadh Season visitors about deception and commercial fraud. At the selling point, it is essential to promote transparency in delivering precautionary information published by businesses and to strengthen accountability (Al-Nsour, 2017). The three key components of marketing literacy—skills, knowledge, and situational awareness—play a crucial role in shaping visitors' awareness regarding deception and commercial fraud. Research indicates that the available sources of information significantly influence how visitors react in different situations. In Saudi Arabia, there is a high level of

awareness among Riyadh Season visitors regarding deception and commercial fraud, coupled with a strong understanding of certain rights, such as the right to personal dignity and respect during the purchasing process, as well as specific rights related to frequent purchases (Al-Nsour et al., 2021). When examining the relationship between the three components of marketing literacy and visitors' awareness in Saudi Arabia, it becomes clear that behavioral situations have a greater impact than the other components, alongside marketing skills in the marketplace. Notably, many shoppers in Saudi Arabia do not actively seek information during the purchasing stage; instead, they primarily rely on store shelves for information about prices and product quality. Some consumers also refer to store brochures. Interestingly, marketing knowledge has been found to negatively impact awareness of Riyadh Season visitors regarding deception and commercial fraud.

Research indicates that marketing literacy significantly impacted visitors' awareness of deceptive practices and commercial fraud in Saudi Arabia. This aligns with previous studies that highlighted the role of media in reducing informational illiteracy (Livingstone, 2010). By delivering positive messages to the community, it can protect visitors from fraud and exploitation, thereby enhancing visitors' awareness during sales interactions. It was found that university marketing courses have minimal influence on improving consumer protection or developing marketing literacy. Only 2.1% of marketing information in Saudi society comes from these courses, despite an illiteracy rate of less than 4%, with 13% of students enrolled in administrative sciences. This finding contradicts earlier research showing that 21% of American students took one or more undergraduate courses in consumer literacy, which contributed to improved marketing skills (Ceciley et al., 2025). Furthermore, the hospitality and tourism sector is one of the fastest-growing industries. However, in less developed economies, there is often low awareness of the importance of advertising products and services within the hospitality industry. The study of Oluwagbemi (2023) was conducted to investigate visitors' awareness and perception regarding the advertising of hotel services in Akure South, Owo, and Ikare Local Government Areas in Ondo State, Nigeria. The data collected revealed that 54.7% of the hotel visitors were male, and 46.7% fell within the age bracket of 26-33 years. All respondents were Nigerians, and 60.8% had attained tertiary education. Notably, 94% of the visitors were aware of marketing efforts in the hotels. The majority recognized various forms of promotion, including word-of-mouth publicity, TV and radio advertising, online and social media advertisements, billboards, and handbills. The marketing statements were evaluated based on their mean scores, which ranged from 4.54 to 4.01. The item "Marketing allows customers to be aware of new services offered" had the highest mean score of 4.54, while "Marketing costs the hotel a lot of money and time" received the lowest mean score of 4.01. There is a significant relationship between visitors' awareness of marketing and their perception. Additionally, an important relationship exists between the visitors' age, place of residence, education, and their awareness of marketing. The study findings of Andriany & Andini (2019) indicate that the main reason for the limited visitor turnout is the lack of an effective marketing strategy, which has relied solely on brochures for promotion. To improve visitor interest, the management of the Talaga Pancar Pine Forest has implemented a comprehensive marketing communication strategy. This strategy encompasses various elements, including advertising, direct marketing, interactive marketing, sales promotions, personal selling, public relations, events and experiences, and word-of-mouth marketing. Another study highlighted both direct and indirect effects of marketing strategies on visitor satisfaction, emphasizing the importance of personalized marketing approaches in

enhancing visitor experiences. By connecting marketing theory with cultural heritage management, this study offers valuable insights for park managers and marketers to improve visitor engagement and preserve cultural heritage (Luekveerawattana, 2025). Furthermore, it can be concluded that the brand of Pohsanten Tourist Village is well-recognized and popular among visitors, positioning it as a notable tourist village in Jembrana Regency (Arjana et al., 2022). The results of Aulia et al. (2023) concluded that the brand activation variables (identity, employee, product, service, and communication) significantly affected brand awareness at the Teras Komuji.

These results have agreed with Manurung & Astini (2020) shows that destination awareness and experience have a negative and significant impact on travel decisions, while destination image has a positive and significant influence on travel decisions. The author recommends that future studies may evaluate these variables in different cultures and tourism destinations and add additional variables that may affect travel decisions. Ashrafi-rizi et al. (2014) and Geraee et al. (2015), indicating that there is a low level of knowledge among students in the field of media literacy because of lack of educational programs in Iranian schools. Their study also highlighted the adolescents' need for a theory-based media literacy education program. In contrast, our current findings consistent with study of Kleemans and Eggink (2012), which decide that the contribution of media literacy programs is limited. Additionally, we found that the level of news in media literacy was moderate, with education and age significantly influencing students' media literacy levels. The study of Tully et al. (2021) confirms the importance of conceptualizing media literacy using the theoretical subcomponents introduced by Ashley and colleagues (2013). Our research utilized separate additional measures, such as self-perceived media literacy (SPML) and the value of media literacy for a democratic society (VML), as opposed to the original measures proposed by Ashley et al. (2013). Study of Al-Nsour (2019) emphasizes the positive statistical effect of financial perspective on planning of marketing communication activities, but the other three non-financial measures statistically failed.

Based on previous results and the feedback provided by the researcher, we recommend the following:

- Educational Market Visits: It is important to emphasize university and school visits to major markets in Saudi Arabia, as well as to institutions that are dedicated to visitor interests. These visits play a crucial role in promoting marketing literacy through practical learning and observation, moving beyond the theoretical content found in specialized courses and reference materials.
- Strengthening Supervision by Tourism-Related Authorities: The supervisory role of the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Tourism, along with the branches of local municipalities, needs to be reinforced. We suggest enhancing legislative power and increasing the authority granted to these bodies, not just relying on financial penalties and the revocation of licenses for businesses involved in fraud. A blacklist should be created for merchants proven to engage in deceptive practices.
- Activating the Role of the Consumer Protection Association: The legislative and supervisory roles of the Consumer Protection Association should be strengthened. The association should participate in inspection campaigns carried out by municipalities and official departments. Moreover, it should enhance its awareness outreach by providing more resources to establish a consumer television station, covering various types of stores and markets.

- Establishment of a Tourism Court: An independent court should be established to address major commercial disputes between traders and visitors. This court should aim to decrease the duration of administrative processes, expedite the resolution of disputed cases, and facilitate effective advertising across various media platforms. Additionally, it should enable electronic communication between consumers and online traders within the jurisdiction.

## **7. Limitations and Future Research:**

It is highly beneficial to apply this study to various individual sectors to identify negative practices occurring within each, such as in the automotive industry, cosmetics, food products, healthcare facilities, and polyclinics. We also anticipate further research focused on strengthening the role of universities in consumer protection through their academic marketing departments. However, this study has certain limitations. It only considers individuals aged 18 and older, as this age group is capable of making purchasing decisions and, consequently, is more susceptible to deception and fraud by retailers and salespeople. The targeted demographic in this study includes individuals who may still be in school, have completed university studies, or are in the workforce. As a result, this group has the potential to develop effective and efficient smart buying decisions.

## **Conclusion:**

The study aimed to determine the impact of media on the development of marketing literacy and its subsequent effect on consumer protection in Saudi Arabia. The findings indicate that, while there is no statistical evidence linking media to increased marketing literacy, there is a significant relationship between marketing literacy and consumer protection. Different forms of media play a key role in shaping literacy levels. Overall, the study shows that media has a limited role in raising awareness, but marketing literacy has a substantial impact on protecting consumers from deception and commercial fraud in Saudi Arabia. Additionally, the results reveal that educated individuals are more likely to utilize media to enhance their literacy. Age also plays a crucial role in the development of marketing literacy; as consumers grow older, their literacy and protection levels tend to increase. Moreover, education level significantly influences consumer protection, with higher levels of education correlating to better consumer protection. Interestingly, increases in income do not statistically contribute to enhanced consumer protection. Finally, the study highlights that elderly consumers (those over 60) and adolescents (under 20) are the least protected groups in Saudi Arabia. This finding may relate to the perception that more educated individuals have greater protection.

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