

# The Sources of Utilitarian Benefits and Hedonic Shopping Enjoyment, and Purchasing Intention in an Online Shopping Mall

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## **Abstract**

*The objective of this paper is to explore critical factors affecting customers' purchasing intention when shopping in a virtual world. Based on the SITEQUAL model, the technology acceptance model and the utilitarian and hedonic motivation theory, this study proposes an integrative model which explains customers' purchasing intentions in an online shopping mall. And it tries to empirically verify the model by using survey data from Korean customers. In addition, the relative importance of site reputation and hedonic shopping enjoyment is examined as moderating variables between utilitarian site quality variables and customers' purchasing intention.*

**Keywords:** *Online Shopping, Utilitarian Benefit, Hedonic Shopping Enjoyment, Site Reputation, Purchasing Intention*

## **1. Introduction**

An online shopping mall is a powerful tool for facilitating firms' sales growth. This paper takes an interest in factors affecting a customer's purchasing intention in a virtual shopping mall. In previous researches, a wide range of theoretical factors were suggested based on the SITEQUAL model, the technology acceptance model and the motivational theory. The suggested factors, however, were redundant or overlapped each other (DeLone and McLean, 1992; Kim and Bang, 2008). For example, price comparison information in an online shopping mall is a significant utilitarian benefit emphasized in the motivational theory. But the SITEQUAL model also treats it as a subordinate dimension of information quality. Elegant website design which is the source of hedonic aspects also is overlapping with the dimension of the SITEQUAL's information system quality. According to the technology acceptance model, the intention to use a technology is influenced by its ease of use and perceived usefulness, which is the similar argument with the utilitarian motivation approach. Because of redundancy and overlapping of critical factors, empirical evidences are hard to interpret their meanings and not easy to be integrated parsimoniously.

Recent studies on online shopping malls consider the utilitarian benefits but also the hedonic aspect. According to Lo and Qu (2015), both utilitarian benefit and hedonic shopping experience positively affect customers' attitude toward using a device to shop online. This study argues that hedonic enjoyment aspect of online shopping is important, especially in case of the impulse buying of products or services. Lin, Fang and Tu (2010) found that the shopping enjoyment significantly affected a consumer's satisfaction and intention to return to an online shopping environment.

This paper has an aim to develop a new model which addresses the redundancy and overlapping problems found in the previous studies. A new model will be developed by identifying each source of utilitarian benefits and hedonic aspects separately. It will integrate the similar and related factors from the SITEQUAL model, the technology acceptance model and the motivational theory which are presumed to affect customers'

purchasing intentions will be integrated. Empirical testing of the model will be implemented by using survey data from Korean customers.

And the reputation of websites has been considered as a critical factor affecting the growth of e-business. Therefore, site reputation and hedonic shopping enjoyment are examined as moderating variables between site-quality factors and customers' purchasing intentions. The relative importance of these moderating variables will be compared with.

## 2. Literature Review

Researches related with customers' purchasing intention in an online shopping mall can be divided into the following three research streams.

First, the modified or extended SITEQUAL model (DeLone and McLean, 1992) is developed to measure the quality of an online shopping mall, because the service quality of a shopping mall may positively affect customer's purchasing intention. But the existing studies have presented a wide range of factors determining the SITEQUAL of an online shopping mall. As a result, empirically suggested factors vary according to researchers and are not integrated parsimoniously (DeLone and McLean, 1992; Kim and Bang, 2008).

Two types of the SITEQUAL factors, that is, information quality and information system quality, are essential in order to deliver utilitarian benefits to customers. However, previous studies on the quality of online shopping malls mainly focused on information quality itself. When evaluating the quality of an online shopping mall, it was assessed only by dimensions which centered on logistics quality, customer service, and product quality (Min, Zhou, Kim, and Kim, 2013).

A few studies emphasized the importance of online system quality when evaluating the online shopping mall (Kim and Bang, 2008; DeLone and McLean, 1992). Kim and Bang (2008) distinguished online system quality from information quality itself: system quality referred to the information system quality (*i.e.*, that which produces the information), whereas information quality referred to the accuracy, currency, and reliability of information). Information quality can be influenced by the level of the information system quality. For example, the high quality information (such as reliable, current, and accurate information) can be accessed easily and applied to decision making in time when supported by the efficient online system. They, therefore, concluded that information quality cannot be separated from the efficient online system quality.

Jun, Yang, and Kim (2004) suggest that the website should be well designed to help customers navigate smoothly. The efficient online system quality can encourage customers to search quality information easily. The technological system (ease of use, quick download, frequent update, privacy and security) can provide large amounts of knowledge easily and safely (Giannakoudi, 1990; Hendrickson and Collins, 1996).

Second, the technology acceptance model (Davis, 1989) is also utilized to grasp the critical factors of an online shopping mall. The model suggested that shopping convenience (such as perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use) determines a person's attitude toward the focused technology (Davis *et. al.*, 1992). But the technology acceptance model has been criticized because of that a person's behavior (purchasing intention) is caused by his attitude toward the technology (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993). At the early stage of adoption in an online shopping mall, the characteristics of technology (convenience and usefulness of an online shopping mall) can influence consumer's purchasing intention. However, early majority and late majority who are fully experienced to purchase products through an online shopping mall will focus on product attributes with their own evaluative criteria, which results in the formation of an attitude that ultimately influences a consumer intention and purchase behavior (Lo and Qu, 2015). Thus, the technology acceptance model is useful in explaining the behaviors of innovator and early adopter at the early stage when innovation comes up. But online shopping mall

is not a innovative idea anymore and already positioned as a common shopping method by Korean customers.

Third, based on the motivation theory or approach (Deci, 1975), hedonic and utilitarian shopping experience were suggested as factors which positively affect customers' attitude toward using a device to shop online (Lo and Qu, 2015). Some consumers may experience specific utilitarian benefits such as comparing prices and time saving, and others may particularly appreciate the hedonic aspects of a shopping technology such as virtually appealing website designs (Davis *et. al.*, 1992). Shopping enjoyment has been empirically supported in a motivation theory approach (Lu, Zhou, and Wang, 2009; Venkatesh, 2000). Lin, Fang and Tu (2010) found that the enjoyment significantly affected a consumer's satisfaction and intention to return to an online shopping environment.

### 3. A Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses

As shown in Figure 1, a conceptual framework is developed that integrates a wide range of influencing elements suggested in the previous studies. As you can see in Figure 1, a customer's purchasing intention in a virtual shopping mall is influenced by utilitarian benefits which consist of online information quality and online system quality, and can be moderated by hedonic enjoyment and website reputation. A more explanation is needed for the sources of utilitarian benefits and the moderating role of hedonic enjoyment and reputation.

First, online system quality refers to the quality of an information processing system itself and the output of information system. It is an important factor in determining a user's satisfaction with online purchase. Hendrickson and Collins (1996) showed empirically that information system quality influenced an end user's purchasing intention, and confirmed the reliability and validity of five attributes (content, accuracy, format, ease of use, and timeliness) representing system quality. Giannakoudi (1990) suggested that other attributes such as security and privacy should be considered important in assessing online system quality.

Second, the traditional perspective defines information quality as the degree to which the format facilitates interpretation and understanding of the information (Wang and Strong, 1996). The most commonly used items for information quality are accuracy, currency, completeness, timeless, and understandability (Delone and Mclean, 1999; Lin and Lu, 2000). According to Xu and Koronios (2004), online information quality plays an important factor in building blocks of an online shopping mall. Information quality is likely to help users to purchase better product and service in a virtual shopping world.

Third, Davis *et. al.*, (1992) added enjoyment as predictor to capture the hedonic motivation to use a technology. Shopping is not merely a process to acquire goods but it is also for enjoyment and it is important to understand that there are consumers who are seeking the full experience. Blakney and Sekely (1994) find that the level of intrinsic enjoyment of the shopping experience affects consumer behavior. In addition, the impact of website reputation on the e-WOM effect is positive in the Park and Lee (2009) and plays in influencing users' attitudes and behavioral intention (Lu *et. al.*, 2009).

Fourth, due to low barriers of entry and lack of gatekeepers on the shopping mall, well-established and reputable websites have been more readily accepted by consumers than unknown sites have (Shamdasani, Stanaland and Tan, 2001). The website reputation is likely to be applied to the e-WOM.

On the basis of the above discussion, the following hypotheses are developed.

H1: System quality of a virtual shopping mall will have a positive impact on a customer's purchasing intention.

H1-1: Ease of use will have a positive impact on a customer's purchasing intention.

H1-2: Privacy and security will have a positive impact on a customer's purchasing intention.

H1-3: Frequent update will have a positive impact on a customer's purchasing intention.

H2: Information quality of a virtual shopping mall will have a positive impact on a customer's purchasing intention.

H2-1: Accurate information will have a positive impact on a customer's purchasing intention.

H2-2: Reliable information will have a positive impact on a customer's purchasing intention.

H2-3: Various information will have a positive impact on a customer's purchasing intention.

H3: The degree of hedonic shopping enjoyment and site reputation will moderate the effects of site quality components on a customer's purchasing intention.

H3-1: The degree of hedonic shopping enjoyment and site reputation will moderate the effects of system quality components on a customer's purchasing intention.

H3-2: The degree of hedonic shopping enjoyment and site reputation will moderate the effects of information quality components on a customer's purchasing intention.

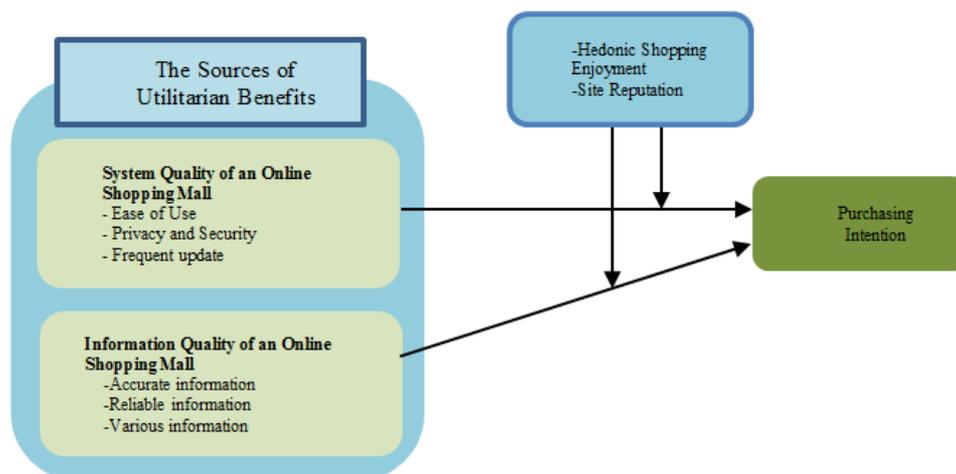


Figure 1. Integrative Framework

#### 4. Data Collection and Measurements

The study sample included students from the metropolitan area of South Korea who had home-based Internet access and experience with product purchases through an online shopping mall. A convenient sampling method was adopted to select a respondent who has been confirmed to experience online shopping in the neighborhood of Busan and Daegu areas. Total survey spans the period from September 1, 2015 to November 30. A total of 95 questionnaires were collected by distributing one hundreds, but after excluding insufficient responses, final questionnaires used for a statistical analysis totaled ninety.

The demographic statistics were used to examine the characteristics of the respondents as follows.

The majority of respondents ( $N=54$ , 60%) were female. With regard to age distribution, the highest frequency ( $N=88$ , 97.7%) was 20s. With regards to education level, the

majority of the respondents were university students ( $N=88$ , 97.76%). Most of the participants had more than 2 years of experience with the Web.

To gather subjective measures of variables, respondents were requested to rate nine operational measures of site system quality, information quality, hedonic enjoyment, reputation and customer's purchase intension. All of which were adopted from the previous studies. Table 1, summarizes the operational measures and their related studies.

**Table 1. Operational Measures**

Construct	Items	References
Site System Quality (ease of use)	The order process is quite simple(EU1) The site' structure and menus are easy to do for me (EU2) The site would be easy to be used to do my shopping(EU3)	Jun, Yang, and Kim (2004)
(security and privacy)	In general making payments online risk-Free(SE1) My privacy would be guaranteed online (SE2) This shopping mall can be trusted to safeguard my personal information (SE3)	Giannakoudi, (1990); Hendrickson and Collins, (1996)
(Frequent update)	This shopping mall system responds quickly to customers' demand and complaints (UP1) This shopping mall system updates frequently (UP2) This shopping mall helps you to buy the products and service which are hard to acquire (UP3)	Kim and Bang(2008); Delond and McLean, (1992)
Information quality (accurate information)	This shopping mall provide accurate information (AC1) The delivered product and service is consistent with catalogue (AC2) The information of this shopping mall is clear and understandable (AC3)	Kim and Bang(2008); Delond and McLean, (1992)
(reliable information)	This shopping mall provides reliable information rather than other shopping mall (RE1) The quality of product and service is trustworthy (RE2) Using the information of this site help me to purchase product and service I really want (RE3)	Lin and Lu(2000)
(various information)	The shopping mall deals with a variety of items(VA1) The shopping mall has wide of products with different prices(VA2) This website deals with a variety of Brands(VA3)	Delone and Mclean, (1999); Lin and Lu(2000)
Hedonic enjoyment	This shopping mall site was truly a joy(HE1) The shopping mall site was truly attractive(HE2) I am addicted to this shopping mall site(HE3)	Albayrak, Caber and Ç ömen(2016)
Reputation	This shopping mall site is well-known(RP1) This shopping mall is reputable to shopping site users(RP2)	Park and Lee(2009)
Purchasing Intention	I would be willing to recommend this shopping mall to my friends(PI1) I would purchase the product of this shopping mall again(PI2)	Lee, Fiore, and Kim (2006)

## 5. Empirical Analysis

### 5.1. Reliability and Validity Verification

In this paper, Cronbach's alpha was calculated to check the reliability of measured items. As shown in Table 2, all Cronbach's alphas were above 0.6 except VA3, SE2, and PI1. The reliability alphas ranged from 0.6 to 0.8 were highly acceptable.

In order to facilitate the interpretation between factors and variables, orthogonal rotation VARIMAX method was utilized. Factor loadings on a core service, an augmented service and a tangible service were greater than 0.6 except four variables (UD1, RE2, VA3, PI1), and were acceptable so as to ensure the validity. And factor loading on purchase intention was greater than 0.5.

**Table 2. Reliability and Validity Test of Online System Quality**

Items		Factor1	Factor2	Factor3
Online System Quality (SQ)	EU1	<b>.782</b>	.213	.013
	EU2	<b>.847</b>	-.102	.190
	EU3	<b>.657</b>	.406	-.031
	SE1	.171	<b>.802</b>	.013
	SE2	-.041	<b>.747</b>	.199
	SE3	.253	<b>.740</b>	.054
	UD1	.096	.457	<b>.565</b>
	UD2	-.034	.164	<b>.868</b>
	UD3	.138	-.066	<b>.818</b>
Eigen Value		3.027	1.563	1.327
Explained Variance		33.631	17.367	14.742
Cumulative Variance		33.631	50.998	65.740
Cronbach's Alpha		.692	.713	.685

**Table 3. Reliability and Validity Test of Online Information Quality**

Items		Factor1	Factor2	Factor3
Online Information Quality (IQ)	AC1	<b>.772</b>	.099	.250
	AC2	<b>.864</b>	.062	.075
	AC3	<b>.740</b>	.183	-.237
	RE1	.084	<b>.802</b>	-.027
	RE2	.157	<b>.571</b>	.376
	RE3	.098	<b>.801</b>	.161
	VA1	-.187	.101	<b>.668</b>
	VA2	.274	-.032	<b>.762</b>
	VA3	.041	.266	<b>.598</b>
Eigen Value		2.677	1.614	1.164
Explained Variance		29.745	17.936	12.930
Cumulative Variance		29.745	47.681	60.611
Cronbach's Alpha		.733	.643	.552

**Table 4. Reliability and Validity Test of Hedonic Shopping Enjoyment, Site Credibility, and Purchasing Intention**

Items		Factor1	Factor2	Factor3
Shopping	HE1	<b>.744</b>	.150	.354
Enjoyment	HE2	<b>.888</b>	-.014	-.154
Reputation	RP1	.116	<b>.863</b>	-.102
	RP2	-.006	<b>.854</b>	.127
Purchasing Intention	PI1	.059	.545	<b>.598</b>
	PI2	.038	-.078	<b>.895</b>
Eigen Value		2.084	1.277	1.135
Explained Variance		34.730	21.276	18.914
Cumulative Variance		34.730	56.006	74.920
Cronbach's Alpha		.537	.717	.534

## 5.2. Reliability and Validity Verification

This research employs an OLS regression analysis to determine the validity of the hypotheses H1. Results of an OLS regression analysis testing hypotheses H1 are shown in Model 1 of Table 5, and Table 6. The  $R^2$  value that indicates the explanatory power of a regression equation showed 43.7% and 0.90%. F-value as the test results of variance analysis for the significance of the regression equation also shows a statistically significant fit ( $p < 0.001$ ).

As regards to the effect of online system quality, the regression results of Model 1 of Table 5, or Table 6, show that two independent variables are statistically significant. Security and privacy reflecting system quality is significantly ( $p < 0.01$ ) and positively ( $B= 0.422$ ) related to purchase intention: thus, supporting Hypothesis 1-2. Frequent update ( $B= 0.182$ ,  $p < 0.1$ ) is also significantly and positively related to purchase intention: thus, supporting Hypothesis 1-3. But ease of use is not significant: thus, not supporting Hypothesis 1-1.

Results of an OLS regression analysis testing hypotheses H2 are also shown in Model 1 of Table 7, or Table 8. The  $R^2$  value which indicates the explanatory power of a regression equation showed 0.90%. F-value as the test results of variance analysis for the significance of the regression equation also shows a statistically significant fit ( $p < 0.001$ ).

As regards to the effect of online information quality, the regression results < model 1 of Table 7, or Table 8, show that two independent variables are statistically significant. Reliable information reflecting information quality is significantly ( $p < 0.01$ ) and positively ( $B= 0.392$ ) related to purchase intention: thus, supporting Hypothesis 2-2. Various information ( $B= 0.212$ ,  $p < 0.1$ ) is also significantly and positively related to purchase intention: thus, supporting Hypothesis 2-3. But accurate information is not significant: thus, not supporting Hypothesis 2-1.

To determine the validity of the hypothesis 3-1, a hierarchical OLS regression analysis is prepared. The results of the hierarchical OLS regression models are also shown in Table 5, and Table 6. Four regression models were run. Model 1 examines the effects of the independent variables on consumer's purchase intention. Model 2, Model 3, and Model 4 test the moderating effects of hedonic shopping enjoyment and reputation on the relationship between online system quality and purchase intention.

As shown in the table, the overall model fit statistics (F-statistics) of four models are very significant ( $p < 0.001$ ), which is a finding that attests to the overall robustness of these models. As regards the moderating effects, Model 2 of Table 5, examines the role of hedonic shopping enjoyments as a moderator between ease of use and customer's purchase intention. The interaction effect in Model 2 is positively and significantly associated with purchase intention. These results can be interpreted as follows: When

customers experience hedonic shopping enjoyment, ease of use will have a more positive impact on their intention to purchase from it.

The remaining two interactions do not show any significant result, thus do not support Hypothesis 3-1. Hypothesis 3-1 was partially supported. The hierarchical models of Table 6, do not support that the components of site reputation as a moderating variable are not statistically significant.

The results of the hierarchical OLS regression models are also shown in Table 7, and Table 8, in order to determine the validity of the hypothesis 3-2. Model 2, Model 3, and Model 4 test the moderating effects of hedonic shopping enjoyment and reputation on the relationship between online information quality and purchase intention.

Regarding to the moderating effects of reputation, Model 2 of Table 8, examines the role of reputation as a moderator between accurate information and customer's purchase intention. The interaction effect in Model 2 is positively and significantly associated with purchase intention. These results can be interpreted as follows: When customers strongly perceive website reputation, accurate information will have a more positive impact on their intention to purchase from it.

The remaining two interactions do not show any significant result, thus do not support Hypothesis 3-2. Hypothesis 3-2 was partially supported. The hierarchical models of Table 7, do not support that the components of hedonic shopping enjoyment as a moderating variable are not statistically significant.

**Table 5. Regression Result: Hedonic Enjoyment as a Moderator for Online System Quality and Purchasing Intention**

	Model 1		Model2		Model3		Model4	
	$\beta$	t-value	$\beta$	t-value	$\beta$	t-value	$\beta$	t-value
Constant	.983	2.025***	.901	1.903*	.898	1.880	.868	1.824
EU	.087	.796	-.073	-.588	-.042	-.126	.128	.358
SE	.442	4.315***	.446	4.475***	.417	1.327	.653	1.823*
UD	.182	1.796*	.201	2.031**	.200	2.001**	-.235	-.698
EU*HE			.047	2.449**	.038	.413	.132	-.084
SE*HE					.009	.099	-.065	-.616
UD*HE							-.008	1.351
$R^2$	.437		.318		.318		.332	
adjusted $R^2$	.248		.287		.280		.286	
F	11.353***		10.482***		8.296***		7.281***	

\*: p < 0.1, \*\*: p < 0.05, \*\*\*: p < .001.

**Table 6. Regression Result: Reputation as a Moderator for Online System Quality and Purchasing Intention**

	Model 1		Model2		Model3		Model4	
	$\beta$	t-value	$\beta$	t-value	$\beta$	t-value	$\beta$	t-value
Constant	.983	2.025***	1.149	1.924*	1.274	2.094	1.356	.638
EU	.087	.796	.011	.057	-.572	-.977	-.660	-1.065
SE	.442	4.315***	.431	4.088***	.944	1.895*	.812	1.402
UD	.182	1.796*	.160	1.445	.143	1.280	.349	.743
EU*RP			.016	.483	.165	1.137	.187	1.216
SE*RP					-.136	-.1.053	-.103	-.693
UD*RP							-.057	-.451
$R^2$	.437		.274		.283		.285	
adjusted $R^2$	.248		.242		.243		.236	
F	11.353***		8.502***		7.032***		5.841***	

\*: p < 0.1, \*\*: p < 0.05, \*\*\*: p < .001.

**Table 7. Regression Result: Hedonic Enjoyment as a Moderator for Online Information Quality and Purchasing Intention**

	Model 1		Model2		Model3		Model4	
	$\beta$	t-value	$\beta$	t-value	$\beta$	t-value	$\beta$	t-value
Constant	2.001	3.572***	2.115	3.487*	2.128	3.486	2.120	3.447
AC	-.167	-.697	-.198	-.796	.193	.180	.043	.034
RE	.392	1.746***	.360	1.542	-.029	-.027	.015	.014
VA	.212	1.796*	.198	1.262	.198	1.253	.302	.624
AC*HE			.013	.502	-.089	-.325	-.046	-.138
RE*HE					.101	.375	.090	.327
VA*HE							-.031	-.228
$R^2$	.099		.102		.103		.104	
adjusted $R^2$	.070		.062		.053		.043	
F	3.341***		2.548**		2.047*		1.696	

\*, p <0.1, \*\*, p<0.05, \*\*\*: p<0.001.

**Table 8. Regression Result: Reputation as a Moderator for Online Information Quality and Purchasing Intention**

	Model 1		Model2		Model3		Model4	
	$\beta$	t-value	$\beta$	t-value	$\beta$	t-value	$\beta$	t-value
Constant	2.001	3.572***	2.318	3.986***	2.312	3.958	2.308	3.928
AC	-.167	-.697	-.379	.157	-1.143	-.731	-1.213	-.734
RE	.392	1.746***	.342	.129	1.077	.719	1.051	.692
VA	.212	1.796*	.182	.238	.192	1.239	.291	.398
AC*RP			.053	.078*	.240	.636	.257	.644
RE*RP					-.181	-.496	-.173	-.466
VA*RP							-.026	-.138
$R^2$	.099		.130		.132		.132	
adjusted $R^2$	.070		.091		.084		.073	
F	3.341***		3.358**		2.713**		2.239**	

\*, p <0.1, \*\*, p<0.05, \*\*\*: p<0.001.

## 6. Conclusion

Existing studies have suggested a wide range of factors determining purchasing intention in an online shopping mall. Since some factors are conflicting with and overlapping each other, it is needed to integrate and classify them in a systematic and concise way. This paper presents a conceptual framework for organizing factors based on the SITEQUAL model, the technology acceptance model and the motivational approach.

Two hypotheses were proposed to examine whether the sources of utilitarian benefit really affect customers' purchasing intention when they are shopping in a virtual world, and to do the moderating roles of hedonic shopping enjoyment and reputation.

The empirical results can be summarized as follows. First, system quality (privacy and security and frequent update) have been found to be important factors in influencing a customer's purchase intention. Second, information quality (reliable information and various information) have been found to be important factors in influencing a customer's purchase intention. Third, the results also hint that hedonic shopping enjoyment plays a moderating role between ease of use and purchase intention and reputation plays a moderating role between accurate information and purchase intention. Therefore, considering the relative importance of utilitarian benefit source according to the degree of hedonic shopping enjoyment and reputation, its practical implication needs to be reflected in the marketing approach of online shopping mall companies.

In relation to implications for theory, this study has contributed to the following aspects. First, in relation to the quality of online shopping mall, this study is the first in developing a conceptual framework that classify a wide range of determinants based on three models. Second, the concept of hedonic shopping enjoyment and reputation were introduced into the academic discussion. The quality of online shopping mall can be evaluated in a more practical context and from a more sophisticated perspective. This finding results in advancing our understanding of online shopping mall quality.

This study has limitations. It adopted a convenient sampling procedure on Korean undergraduate students. The representativeness of samples collected is not guaranteed, and the number of samples is not sufficient for the general interpretation of this study.

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