

## Effects of Shopping Orientation, Trust and Satisfaction on WOM Intention: Focusing on Undergraduates' HMR Choices

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### Abstract

*This study aimed to the effects of shopping orientation on the trust in HMR products and the effects of the satisfaction with HMR in between the trust in products and WOM among undergraduates who have little repulsion against HMR items. As results, reasonable/hedonic orientation has positive influence on trust, respectively. Satisfaction was moderated between trust and WOM intention. And trust has full-mediated between reasonable/hedonic orientation and word-of-mouth intention, respectively. These findings suggest that it is more effective for companies to offer well-made HMR products than low-priced products, and it is necessary to provide some personal experience such as fun or positive factors in relation to purchasing HMR products. And concerning the moderation effects, corporate strategies need be diversified so as to exert some primacy effects on undergraduates when launching initial products and to form some rapport.*

**Keywords:** Shopping Orientation, WOM Intention, Trust, Satisfaction, HMR

### 1. Introduction

Not only changing demographics and social structures including the increasing number of single-person households, women in the workforce and dual-earner couples and the low birth rates, but also a shift in lifestyle including the prevalent 5-day workweek system and camping culture have impacted on local food culture. Notably, people spend less time in the kitchen cooking, and consumers find it more sensible to purchase ready-made products than to buy ingredients for cooking owing to the growing number of small families [1]. In the same vein, frozen and refrigerated ready meals available at supermarket stores are reported as the only growth category. Likewise, HMR (Home Meal Replacement) items are reported to have garnered more than 20% increase in sales on online shopping channels, ranked top on TV home shopping channels over the past 3~4 years [2].

[3] reported that local HMR market recorded 1.3 trillion Won last year from 700 billion Won in 2010, and is expected to reach more than 1.5 trillion Won this year. Some are even more optimistic that the market size will exceed 2.3 trillion Won. This phenomenal growth is consistent with the '2015 Distribution Industry White Paper' recently published by the Korea Chamber of Commerce (KCCI). According to the report, convenience stores (CVS) achieved 8.7% year-over-year sales growth in 2014, recording the highest growth rate among offline distribution channels. Because, HMR was ranked second in 2014 in convenience stores, which is significant in that as a distribution channel representing short-distance hand-to-mouth buying, convenience stores should develop differentiated products meeting customers' consumption patterns to remain competitive[4, 3 re-quoted].

This serial study including [5]'s study takes a different perspective from [3], and focuses on undergraduates' shopping orientation. Undergraduates are called a new

generation characterized by the preference for being personal, amuse-standard, natural, trans-border and extreme self-loving [6]. Also, they have a consumption-oriented lifestyle, indulge in communication in their own language using laptops or other mobile devices, enjoy eating out, and often consume HMR, for example, lunch boxes or triangular seaweed and rice rolls, at convenience stores office workers in their 20s [7].

Thus, this study focuses on undergraduates who have little repulsion against, and are likely to continue consuming HMR and to investigate the effects of their shopping orientation mediated by their trust in HMR products on their word-of-mouth(WOM) intention, and also the effects of undergraduates' satisfaction with HMR in between their trust in products and WOM intention. The present findings shed light on the factors of shopping orientation that influence the trust in HMR, and the roles of satisfaction with HMR in between the trust in products and word-of-mouth intention among undergraduates as future consumers which will provide implications for deriving diverse corporate strategies to strengthen the competitive advantages of the products.

## 2. Theoretical Background

All HMR items are defined as commercially available fully-cooked or half-cooked food products that are ready to be eaten instantly or needs some hassle-free cooking before being consumed. HMR foods are categorized into ready-to-eat, ready-to-heat and ready-to-end-cook foods depending on the extent to which it cooked at home and by HMR providers [3] and [8-9]. As for previous studies on HMR selection attributes, [10] suggests consumers use HMR for 'convenience', 'kinds of foods' and 'diversity' and purchase HMR for 'convenience', 'visual effects', 'samples', 'flavors', and 'neat packages'. [3] and [11] and many others present a range of selection attributes.

One's shopping orientation mirrors the person's value. Therefore, shopping value is defined as a consumer's relative evaluation of shopping through the person's qualitative, quantitative, subjective and objective shopping experience [12]. One's shopping orientation is reported to be formed by the influence of socialization agents, e.g. family members, friends, media, and schools [13-14]. This study surveys undergraduates, or future consumers, on the grounds that the shopping orientation formed during one's childhood or at a young age persists into adulthood [13-15].

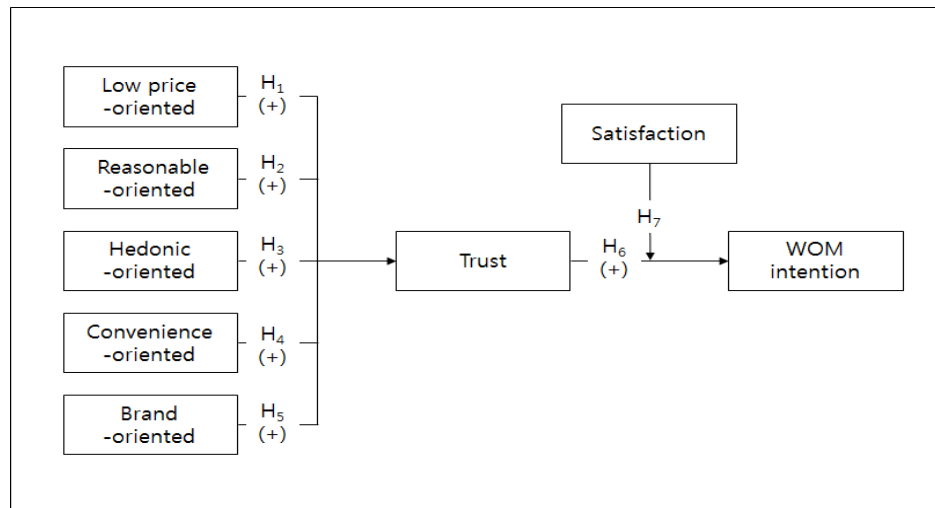
Trust is defined as expecting an entity to be faithful to its promises, roles and duties with honesty and consistency of speech and action without falsehood [16]. Trust refers to an overall belief in the reliability of products manifested in consumers' purchase behavior, and a strong conviction about product attributes evaluated by purchasers [17]. As such, trust is one of significant cues influencing consumers' decision-making process, where it serves as an important factor impacting on one's attitude or behavior intention across the board [18].

Satisfaction with a product is a multi-dimensional inclusive concept, referring to the extent to which one is favorable for the product in the process of comparison, evaluation, selection and purchase [19]. A consumer's satisfaction with a product is believed to exert a critical influence on not only his/her initial purchase behavior but also subsequent purchases on the grounds that satisfaction with a product directly and strongly acts on the decision making for a purchase behavior, and that it is part of the evaluation concerning whether the chosen option conforms to a prior belief in it as well as any difference between a pre-purchase expectation of the product and an actual feeling after use [20].

The WOM behavior has been proposed as a behavior of a customer satisfied or dissatisfied with a purchased product [21]. Word of mouth arises from positive or negative feelings about a certain purchase experience, referring to a verbal exchange of information about products or services between family members or friends [22- 24].

### 3. Research Design & Hypotheses

This study builds on [25] to categorize undergraduates' shopping orientation into low-price orientation, reasonable orientation, hedonic orientation, convenience orientation and brand orientation, all of which seem to influence their trust in HMR. [13] reported that consumers' needs vary with personal shopping orientation, which is attributable to individual consumers' personality and attitude. Therefore, undergraduates' shopping orientation is highly likely to affect their trust in HMR to varying degrees. Meanwhile, [26] state that trust serves as an important parameter in transactions by reducing risks in uncertain settings, relieving uncertainties of transactions, triggering the commitment to customer relations and thus increasing the long-term orientation. Accordingly, undergraduates' trust in HMR is likely to mediate in between their shopping orientation and word-of-mouth intention. The roles of satisfaction in between trust and word-of-mouth intention are supported by primacy effects [27] and rapport [28]. That is, undergraduates who basically trust in HRM products, have various opportunities to experience positive initial results upon eating HRM foods or have rapport with HMR items after eating it is highly likely to act out some WOM behaviors. Based on the previous studies aforementioned, the present study formulates the following model and hypothesis.



Note) Hypotheses of Mediating effect(H<sub>8</sub> ~ H<sub>12</sub>) were not shown in Research Model, WOM: word-of-mouth

**Figure 1. Research Model & Hypotheses**

- Hypothesis 1. Low cost orientation will have a positive effect on trust.
- Hypothesis 2. Reasonable orientation will have a positive effect on trust.
- Hypothesis 3. Hedonic orientation will have a positive effect on trust.
- Hypothesis 4. Convenience orientation will have a positive effect on trust.
- Hypothesis 5. Brand orientation will have a positive effect on trust.
- Hypothesis 6. Trust will have a positive effect on WOM intention.
- Hypothesis 7. Satisfaction will moderate between trust and WOM intention.
- Hypothesis 8. Trust will mediate between low cost orientation and WOM intention.
- Hypothesis 9. Trust will mediate between reasonable orientation and WOM intention.
- Hypothesis 10. Trust will mediate between hedonic orientation and WOM intention.
- Hypothesis 11. Trust will mediate between convenience orientation and WOM intention.
- Hypothesis 12. Trust will mediate between brand orientation and WOM intention.

#### 4. Empirical Analysis

Data from [3] are used here for the empirical analysis. A total of 140 valid questionnaires were collected and utilized for analysis. Frequency analysis, descriptive statistical analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, simple regression, multiple regressions, and hierarchical regression were conducted using SPSS 19.0 and AMOS 19.0. Gender distribution of participants was more female students 108(77.1%) than male student 32(22.9%), and the average age of participants was 19.8 years [3]. The following measures are used in the analysis. First, a total of 18 question items concerning the shopping orientation, specifically, 3 items about low-price orientation, 4 about reasonable orientation, 4 about hedonic orientation, 3 about convenience orientation and 4 about brand orientation, are rated on a 5-point Likert scale based on [25]. 4 question items about trust are rated on a 7-point Likert scale based on [29] and [30]. 5 question items about satisfaction and another 5 items about WOM intention are rated on a 7-point Likert scale based on [31-33] respectively. To deal with the difference of scales between variables, the ratings are converted into z-scores.

**Table 1. Reliability and Validity**

Variable	First Item	Final Item	Cronbach's $\alpha$	Construct Reliability	AVE
Low Price	3	3	.778	.803	.577
Reasonable	4	4	.833	.824	.543
Hedonic	4	4	.869	.839	.569
Convenience	4	0	-	-	-
Brand	4	3	.783	.839	.637
Trust	4	4	.898	.846	.582
Satisfaction	5	5	.934	.891	.621
WOM Intention	4	4	.930	.895	.682

The confirmatory factor analysis and reliability analysis results are shown in Table 1. According to the confirmatory factor analysis, the standard loading of the items about convenience shopping orientation turns out to be below 0.5. Thus, four items about convenience orientation factors and one item about brand orientation are excluded from the analysis.

The results of correlation analysis used to determine the directional relationship among variables are shown in Table 2. Although female students outnumber males, females and males are treated as dummy variables (*i.e.*, 1 is female and 0 is male), respectively, to determine any gender-related difference in the analysis.

**Table 2. Results of Correlation Analysis**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.Gender	-							
2.Low price	.108	(.577)						
3.Reasonable	.145	.405**	(.543)					
4.Hedonic	.248**	.348**	.477**	(.569)				
5.Brand	.236**	-.025	.104	.289**	(.637)			
6.Trust	-.101	.137	.215*	.197*	-.113	(.582)		
7.Satiafaction	-.098	.120	.205*	.244**	-.048	.796**	(.621)	
8.WOM Intention	-.115	.020	.149	.138	-.064	.774**	.653**	(.682)
Mean	0.71	3.64	3.47	3.49	2.87	4.02	4.12	3.73
S.D	0.42	0.78	0.84	0.95	0.49	1.10	1.17	1.13

Note) \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , ( ), AVE marked in ( )

For verification of hypotheses, gender, and age, demographic variables were controlled for regression analysis. As result, low price orientation ( $\beta=0.150$ ,  $p=.080$ ) has marginally significant on trust, reasonable orientation ( $\beta=0.235$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and hedonic orientation ( $\beta=0.248$ ,  $p<.01$ ) has statistically significant positive influence on trust, respectively. However brand orientation has no statistically significant influence on trust. Therefore, hypothesis 2 and hypothesis 3 was adopted, respectively. However, hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 5 was not adopted, respectively. Meanwhile, Trust ( $\beta=0.770$ ,  $p<.01$ ) was strong positive influence on WOM intention. Therefore hypothesis 6 was adopted.

The moderation effects are tested with the hierarchical regression analysis. The analysis results of demographics, trust and satisfaction, and interactions between trust and satisfaction applied in the first, second and third steps, respectively, are shown in Table 3. As the trust-satisfaction interaction proves statistically significant ( $\beta = -.119$ ,  $p <.05$ ), the hypothesis 7 has adopted.

**Table 3. Result of Moderation Effect**

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Gender(Female=1, Male=0)	-.114	-.034	-.033
Age	.054	.053	.073
Trust		.676**	.641
Satisfaction		.118	.117
Trust*Satisfaction			-.119*
R Square	.016	.607	.620
R Square change	-	.592	.012
F	1.098 <sup>n.s</sup>	51.826***	43.363***

To test the mediation effects, the 3-step mediation regression analysis is used following [34]. As a result, trust fully mediated between reasonable/hedonic orientation and word-of-mouth intention, respectively. Hence, hypotheses 8 and 12 are rejected, whereas hypotheses 9 and 10 are accepted.

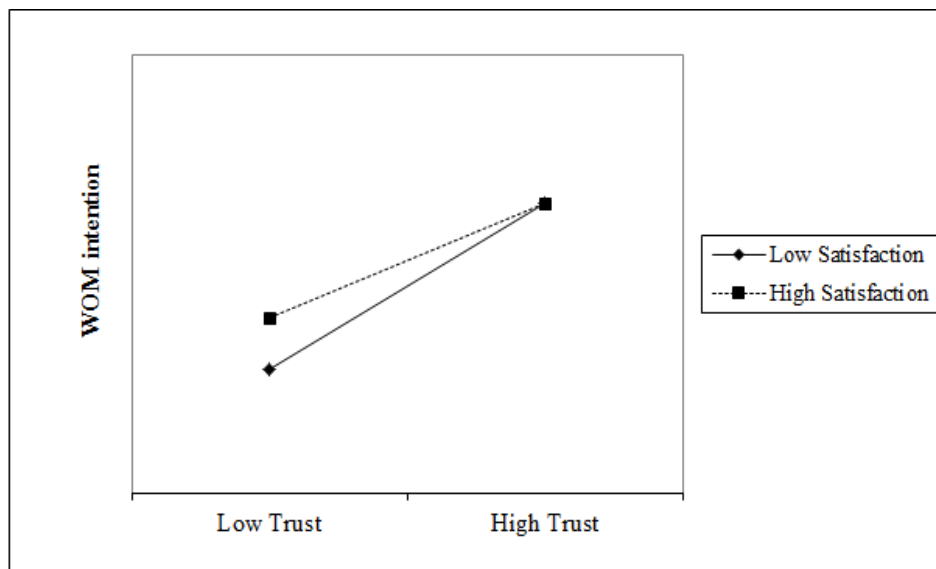
**Table 4. Result of Mediation Effect**

Mediating variable	Independent variable	Step	Result ( $\beta$ )	R <sup>2</sup>	F
Trust	Reasonable	1( $\beta_1$ )	.235**	.603	50.796***
		2( $\beta_2$ )	.172*		
		3( $\beta_3,IV$ )	-.010 <sup>n.s</sup>		
		3( $\beta_4,MV$ )	.772**		
	Hedonic	1( $\beta_1$ )	.248**	.603	50.779***
		2( $\beta_2$ )	.189*		
		3( $\beta_3,IV$ )	-.002 <sup>n.s</sup>		
		3( $\beta_4,MV$ )	.771**		

Note) \*,  $p<.05$ , \*\*  $p<.01$ , \*\*\*  $p<.001$ , Dependent variable (DV) is WOM intention. And we proposed three-step results of R<sup>2</sup> and F-value.

## 5. Conclusion and Discussion

Based on the present findings, the following conclusions and implications are derived here. First, although female students outnumber males, the findings indicate some gender difference in shopping orientation. The correlation analysis highlights the statistically significant relationship in terms of hedonic and brand orientation between males and females, which finding is consistent with previous reports that gender difference is present in shopping styles (*e.g.*, [35-37]). Depending on economic or environmental conditions [37], information processing [35] and thus shopping orientation varies with gender. Owing to the gender difference in dominant traits [36], female consumers sufficiently examine and analyze products before buying [38] and tend to be influenced by ads to a great extent [39]. Hence, future studies need to investigate the gender difference by keeping a balance between males and female subjects. Second, undergraduates' reasonable and hedonic shopping orientation increases their trust in HMR products, whereas the low-price and brand orientation fails to influence the trust. This finding is rather surprising and suggests it is more effective for companies to offer well-made one-dish meals than low-priced products, and it is necessary to provide some personal experience such as fun factors in relation to purchasing HMR products. Third, concerning the moderation effects, corporate strategies need be diversified so as to exert some primacy effects on undergraduates when launching initial products and to form some rapport.



**Figure 2. Results of Moderation Effect**

Figure 2 shows that the high trust in HMR leads to WOM intention regardless of the satisfaction level, and that active WOM behavior is possible when one is satisfied with a product even at a low trust level. Hence, making efforts to have undergraduates empathize with what HMR products pursue is a very important strategy. Lastly, the mediation effects suggest that undergraduates' trust in HMR is more important than their shopping orientation. That is, undergraduates' trust in products results in corporate competitiveness. Assuming trust is defined as a strong belief in an entity in the course of decision making [18], both business and product ethics will be a significant factor.

This study has the following limitations. First, the data used here are collected from undergraduates majoring in food and nutrition. The elimination of the convenience

shopping orientation is ascribable to these subjects' prior knowledge. Hence, future studies need to allow for the nature of sample groups in collecting data. Second, this study fails to analyze the gender difference as females outnumber males. Previous studies elucidate the gender difference in shopping orientation, which warrants further studies to analyze balanced samples and derive interesting implications. Finally, the limitations relevant to the self-report questionnaire survey and the cross-sectional study design need be remedied.

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