


## Article

# Effect of Food Consumption Values of Vietnamese Consumers on the Reliability and Purchase Intention of Korean Home Meal Replacements

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**Abstract:** The Vietnamese home meal replacement (HMR) market is expected to face intensified competition due to economic development and urbanization. This study analyzes how the food consumption values of Vietnamese consumers affect the perceived reliability and intention to purchase Korean food in the form of HMRs and provides basic data to establish strategies for Korean HMRs to secure an advantage in an intensely competitive market. A survey was conducted with Vietnamese consumers who had used Korean HMRs before and are constantly using HMRs on a regular basis. To analyze the relationships between food consumption values, the reliability of Korean HMR, and the intention to purchase Korean HMRs, exploratory factor analysis, reliability analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, and covariance structural models were used. Among the factors of food consumption value, health, safety, time saving, and convenience have a positive effect on the reliability of Korean HMRs, while family and cost-effectiveness do not. Moreover, this reliability has a positive effect on the purchase intention of Korean HMRs. This study is significant in that while investigating Korean HMRs, it is pioneering research on Vietnamese consumers regarding HMRs. Therefore, the results of this study can be used to secure the competitiveness of Korean HMRs in the Vietnamese market.

**Keywords:** convenience food; food consumption value; consumption behavior; Vietnamese consumers; Korean wave



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## 1. Introduction

Vietnam's GDP (Gross Domestic Product) is constantly growing by 6–7% on average each year based on the Đổi Mới (renovation/innovation) policy and the Communist Party's political stability [1–3]. Vietnam experienced 7.1% GDP growth in 2018 and increased investments and exports due to an improved business environment and higher productivity in the service industries [4]. In particular, the retail industry is a market that shows high growth rates, achieving a 12.7% annual sales increase in 2019. As incomes have increased and the number of young consumers has grown due to rapid urbanization, the market for convenience stores has shown remarkable growth, whereas traditional markets are declining [5].

Vietnam's population surpassed 100 million in 2020, making it a large domestic market [6]. The average age of the Vietnamese population is 32.5 years [7], and the population pyramid is wide in the middle, with a large percentage of people at the median age. The population pyramid was affected by the war that continued until the mid-1970s. As a result of a post-war baby boom, there is a high ratio of people in their 20s and 30s born in the 1980s. Approximately 50% of the entire population is under thirty, giving

the youth consumer market the potential to be a driving force for economic growth [8]. Meanwhile, family size in Vietnam is constantly changing. According to the United Nations Population Division [9], households with four to five members accounted for 49.4% of all Vietnamese households in 1985, indicating relatively large families were the norm. However, households with two to three members increased to 36.3% and single-person households to 7.3% in 2009, double the figures for 1985. According to the 2019 Vietnam population and housing census [10], the number of single-person households has continued to increase to 10.4%, and the number of households with two to three members has risen to 38.4%.

Economic growth, urbanization, population structure, reduced family size, and increases in female participation in the work force are key factors contributing to growth in the Vietnamese home meal replacement (HMR) market [11–16]. Given all these factors, this market is expected to achieve remarkable growth as it replaces stay-at-home meals. In fact, the Vietnamese HMR market is now worth 99.18 million US Dollars (2019), showing an average annual growth rate of 9.7% from 2014 to 2019 [1]. However, there are insufficient studies on how this market operates. Previous studies are limited to those focusing on the future consequences of convenience food consumption among teenage consumers [17] or the attitudes and purchase intentions of Vietnamese consumers toward Korean ginseng products [18]. Even when expanding the scope to Southeast Asian countries, there are limited studies on the influential factors informing the intention to purchase HMRs [19,20].

The ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) region is characterized by openness based on the rapid development and advancement of the Internet infrastructure and accessibility to global culture, but combined with conservatism, such as restrictions on expressions, prohibition, and regulations due to the political system and religious disciplines [21]. Thus, even though the ASEAN market has a broad economic, social, and cultural spectrum [22], the consumer goods market is the territory of value-oriented consumption. It is thus necessary to conduct market research based on macroscopic industrial conditions as well as preliminary research on the local social culture and taste that would support successful market entrance. Food, in particular, involves various factors that affect choice and consumption. Further, people tend to make decisions based on personal food systems when making food choices [23]. Food choice values play a key role in personal food systems [23], serving as an important factor that influences food choices and eating behavior [24]. Therefore, it is necessary to identify the food consumption values of each market and analyze their impact.

Having said that, there is currently no research that identifies the food consumption values of Vietnamese consumers to help in predicting behavior or determining the relationship between those values and behavior. Thus, to predict the specific eating behavior of Vietnamese consumers, it is necessary to determine their food consumption values. In this context, it is worth noting that Korea and Vietnam have a similar food culture in terms of fermented food, staple diet (rice, porridge, noodles), soups and stews, and side dish recipes [25]. The two countries established diplomatic relations in 1992 and signed a FTA (Free Trade Agreement) in 2015. Since then, they have actively interacted as major trading partners [26].

More recently, the Vietnamese people have shown an increasing interest in Korea and Korean food due to the Korean wave (hallyu) that includes K-drama and K-pop [27]. Given this background of familiarity, Korean HMR products are likely to have a competitive advantage over products from other countries in the Vietnamese market. Accordingly, to promote the growth and competitiveness of Korean HMRs in that market, it is necessary to examine and analyze its effect on Vietnamese attitudes toward home meal replacement and their purchase intentions of this source of food.

Therefore, this study analyzes the effect of the food consumption values of Vietnamese consumers on the perceived reliability of Korean HMRs and how this reliability affects their intention to purchase Korean HMRs. Hopefully, the results of this study can help set the direction for HMR development and establish marketing strategies based on the

consumer attributes and needs of the HMR market in Vietnam, within the now established pattern of continuous urbanization as well as the likely future increases in nuclear families and single-person households that will follow. This study provides basic data for firms to secure a competitive advantage in the Vietnamese HMR market, where intense competition is expected.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Food Consumption Value

Value is defined as the belief that forms the basis of an individual's attitudes and behavioral decisions [28] and plays a key role in understanding sociopsychological phenomena [29]. Human beings act based on their values even when they are not aware of those values [30]. Therefore, understanding values is essential for understanding and predicting human behavior.

Individual values also affect food choices and consumption. Connors et al. [23] define elements that are important in the food choice process as food choice values. These include elements such as taste, health, convenience, and cost. These values are important factors that affect food choice and can be used as a predictive tool for making decisions about eating behavior [31]. The fundamental purpose of consumption in the past has been explained in terms of fulfilling functional needs. However, now the purpose and symbolism of consumption is expanding into its sociocultural aspects [32–35]. Therefore, values related to food consumption must be expanded from product values, such as nutritional value or price value, to consumer-centered social values [23,36]. Accordingly, Dagevos and Ophem [36] expanded food consumption values (FCV) into the following four different values: product, process, place, and emotional values. These values include elements from production to consumption as well as the practical and emotional aspects of products.

Consumer values are changed by their stage of life, the diverse experiences they have had, and their sociocultural background [23,37,38]. Vietnam is a country with a family-oriented culture where people think of their family as an extension of themselves and are influenced by their family in making various decisions in life [39–41]. Therefore, to understand the food buying behavior and attitude of consumers and to meet their needs, it is necessary to determine consumption values taking into account their sociocultural background and stage of life. Furthermore, the food industry must analyze the factors affected by consumption values as well as understand the extent of their effects. They may then use the results to develop products and services and establish marketing strategies [36].

Among the studies on food consumption values, those on HMR are limited. Lee and Hong [42] analyzed the attitudes, satisfaction, and purchase intention of refrigerated HMR products according to consumption values. They discovered that emotional value was the most important and that emotional value and conditional value had a considerable impact on attitudes toward a product, customer satisfaction, and purchase intention. Kang et al. [43] examined the relationship between functional consumption value and repurchase intention of consumers who have tried convenience store packaged meals (dosirak). They found that the functional value had a positive effect on attributes such as taste, originality, harmony, nutrition, and repurchase intention.

Park et al. [44] analyzed the value structure of consumers using lunch boxes from convenience stores in Korea and identified pleasure, stimulation, comfort, economic stability, and initiative as values. They then analyzed the difference in the value structure between men and women. Bottonaki and Mattas [45] studied the effect of individual values on convenience food consumption behavior and revealed that the consumption of convenience foods is related to the values of seeking new experiences and motivating the promotion of personal interests. Among the values, convenience orientation includes detailed items such as meal planning, food shopping, meal preparation, and clearing up, and the concepts of time saving and utilization. Che et al. [18] conducted a study on the consumption values of Vietnamese consumers. As a result of analyzing how the consumption values of Vietnamese

affect attitudes toward Korean ginseng products and purchase intention, social value was found to have a positive effect in this study.

Studies of consumption values in terms of food groups and dining other than HMRs are as follows. Qasim et al. [46] discovered that among consumption values, functional, conditional, epistemic, and emotional values had a positive effect on the intention to purchase organic food. Rahanama [47] analyzed the effect of consumption values on women's choice behavior in choosing organic yogurt and found that epistemic value and health value had significant effects. According to Wang [48], price, quality, emotional, and social values affected snack food brand preferences, while only price value and emotional value affect the purchase intention. Finally, Choe and Kim [49] analyzed how the local food consumption value of tourists affects their awareness and behavior and suggested that there is a diversity in values depending on the culture and region of consumers. In sum, consumption values and food consumption values are factors affecting product attitudes and awareness. Based on these insights, the following hypotheses can be established:

**Hypothesis 1.** *The family values of Vietnamese consumers will have a significant effect on the reliability of Korean HMRs.*

**Hypothesis 2.** *The cost-effectiveness values of Vietnamese consumers will have a significant effect on the reliability of Korean HMRs.*

**Hypothesis 3.** *The health values of Vietnamese consumers will have a significant effect on the reliability of Korean HMRs.*

**Hypothesis 4.** *The safety values of Vietnamese consumers will have a significant effect on the reliability of Korean HMRs.*

**Hypothesis 5.** *The time saving values of Vietnamese consumers will have a significant effect on the reliability of Korean HMRs.*

**Hypothesis 6.** *The convenience values of Vietnamese consumers will have a significant effect on the reliability of Korean HMRs.*

## 2.2. Product Reliability and Purchase Intention

Reliability is generally related to qualities such as sincerity, honesty, and kindness between the parties to a transaction or exchange and affects relevant decisions and feelings of fulfillment [49,50]. In addition, reliability serves as a key factor that informs credibility, soundness, integrity, and the influence of brands and products, which then induces consumer behavior that leads to product and service performance [51].

Product reliability is a measure of the reliability that consumers perceive in a product and serves as a determinant of choice and assessment when purchasing that product [52]. According to Yoon [53], there are three stages of building the reliability of a product. The first is chaos. Consumers who first encounter a certain product are in chaos due to anxiety and mistrust about product safety as well as other unpredictable outcomes. They then make conscious efforts to build reliability and test purchase a product (based on external reliability) even when there is only a certain level of reliability or none at all. The second stage is the process of confirming reliability and reconfirming safety. The last stage is to maintain reliability. Consumers pay attention to various reliability factors when they have faith in the product and are certain about its safety, thereby experiencing an enhancement of reliability through their own experience of using the product. Moreover, reliability has a positive effect on behavior [54]. Thus, reliability must be improved to induce positive behavior from consumers, as well as to examine and analyze the factors affecting reliability.

Previous studies on HMR product reliability are as follows: Kim et al. [52] analyzed how HMR selection attributes affect consumers' perceived reliability of products and discovered that the overall selection attributes of HMRs had a positive effect on reliability.

In particular, health, price, and convenience had a significant effect among selection attributes. Ra [55] also found that convenience had a significant effect on attitudes toward HMRs and the intention to repurchase and also proved the moderating effect of reliability. Lee et al. [56] analyzed the relationship between the attributes of convenience store private brand products, consumer satisfaction, and reliability. Their study revealed that retailer attitude, menu quality, and price affected consumer satisfaction, which then had a positive effect on brand reliability.

To understand the eco-friendly behavior of convenience food consumers, Ricci et al. [57] analyzed how consumer perceptions of product reliability affect the purchase of eco-friendly products and discovered that the former had a positive effect on the latter. De Jong et al. [58] studied the relationship between the values of middle-income households in the Asia-Pacific region, perceived reliability of sources of nutrition information, and use of convenience stores, and revealed that the hedonic value and perceived reliability of sources of nutrition information had a significant effect on the use of convenience stores. Han [59] studied the relationship between HMR brand image, purchase intention, and brand loyalty and found that the emotional image and social image of a brand had a significant effect on product purchase intention and brand loyalty, and brand reliability played a mediating role in this situation.

As purchase intention has been perceived as a key factor that predicts actual behavior [60], many studies and analyses have been conducted in various fields, including food. Purchase intention is a factor that directly affects the actual buying behavior of consumers [61], indicating the possibility that individual beliefs and attitudes before purchase could lead to actual buying behavior [62]. Oh et al. [62] described purchase intention as a determinant of buying behavior, as well as the consumer's willingness to purchase a particular product. Various factors affect purchase intention, such as personal values, lifestyles, food consumption values, brand image, attitudes, service quality, product selection attributes, and satisfaction [63–66]. Accordingly, industrial circles such as companies strive to understand purchase intentions from a marketing perspective, and related studies use it as a key variable for consumer behavior and business performance measurement [67]. Therefore, it is necessary to identify the factors that influence purchase intention and final buying behavior.

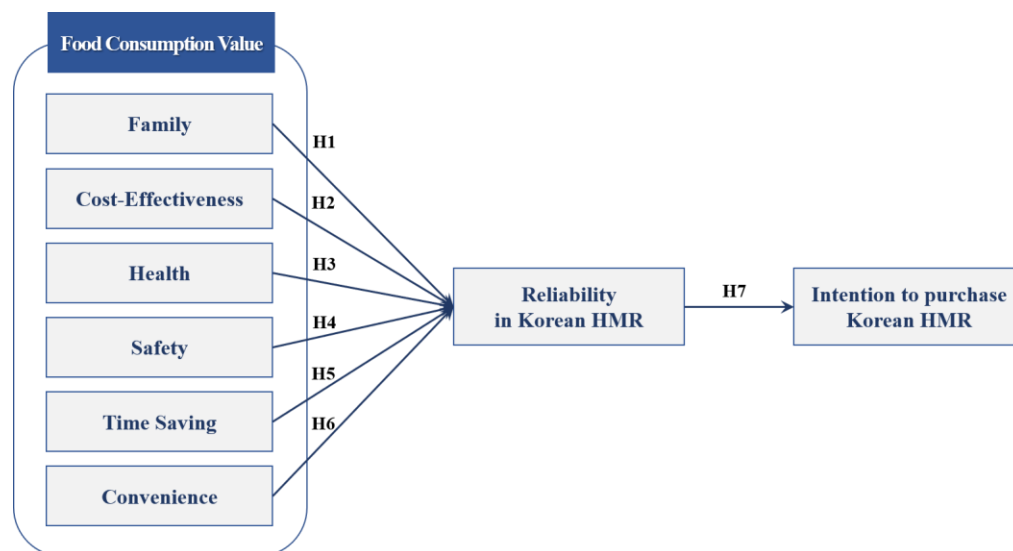
Previous studies on the intention to purchase HMRs are as follows: Sabri et al. [68] analyzed the factors affecting the intention to purchase instant foods sold in convenience stores and discovered that food safety, knowledge of quality, and price were key factors affecting the purchase of instant foods. Hawa et al. [69] conducted a study on the intention to purchase ready-to-eat foods among HMR products and revealed that ease of use and time saving are key factors affecting purchase intention, including health, quality, and brand image.

Studies on ASEAN consumers, including the Vietnamese, include the following. Kim et al. [14] selected trust, value consciousness, importance of origin, hallyu, and attitudes toward Korean products as factors of hallyu-related product purchases and examined their relationship to purchase intention. The results showed that value consciousness, hallyu, and attitudes toward Korean products had a positive effect on purchase intention. Yunus et al. [70] analyzed the factors considered by consumers when purchasing halal certified HMR products manufactured by non-Muslim companies and discovered that halal awareness and product ingredients had a significant effect on product purchase intention. Baskaran et al. [19] suggested the need to discuss price, safety, packaging, brand image, and convenience as external factors that influence urban residents in Malaysia and induced their purchase intention for HMRs. They also identified the need to study the relationship between constructs such as purchase intention, external factors of purchase intention, and interest in nutrition information. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed based on previous studies.



**Hypothesis 7.** *The reliability of Korean HMR products among Vietnamese consumers will have a significant effect on the intention to purchase Korean HMR.*

Figure 1 shows the research model to analyze the relationship between food consumption values and the reliability of Korean HMR (which depends on these values), which in turn affects the intention to purchase Korean HMR.



**Figure 1.** Research model.

### 3. Materials and Methods

#### 3.1. Participants and Survey Period

The participants of this study were Vietnamese consumers living in Vietnam who have used Korean HMR before and are using HMR regularly. Their ages were limited to 19–39 years old taking into account the average age in Vietnam (30.9 years, Worldometers, 2019) [71]. The survey was conducted by Macromill Southeast Asia Vietnam, a specialized survey agency in Vietnam, with a panel of Vietnamese consumers, and was conducted online from 22 October to 10 November 2019. The questionnaire was in Vietnamese, and emails, including the online survey link, were sent to those who met the requirements to be participants. Prior to responding to the questionnaire items, they were asked to provide their age and experience of using Korean HMRS so that only the eligible participants could participate in the survey. In addition, to minimize the bias of responses according to gender and age, these variables were allocated equally. The questionnaire provided examples of Korean HMR products released in Vietnam. Statistical analysis was conducted on the responses of 327 consumers from the total of 500 received that excluded those consumers who have never used Korean HMR products.

#### 3.2. Questionnaire and Statistical Analysis

The questionnaire used in this study was developed from those used in previous studies [18,45,72–77]. The items included food consumption values, the reliability of Korean HMR, the intention to purchase Korean HMR, and demographic characteristics. A 7-point Likert scale was used for food consumption value, reliability of Korean HMR, and purchase intention relating to Korean HMRS. All statistical analyses were performed using SPSS 23.0 and AMOS 18.0. A frequency analysis was conducted to analyze demographic characteristics and general matters. Exploratory factor analysis, reliability analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, and covariance structural models were used to analyze the relationship between the food consumption values, the reliability of Korean HMRS, and the intention to purchase Korean HMRS.

#### 4. Results

The demographic characteristics of the participants were as follows (Table 1). There were 161 men (49.2%) and 166 women (50.8%), and 85 (26.0%) were aged 19–24, 78 (23.8%) were aged 25–29, 85 (26.0%) were aged 30–34, and 79 (24.2%) were aged 35 or above. A total of 218 participants (66.7%) were married, and 105 (32.1%) were single. Most of the participants (224, 68.5%) were university graduates, and 234 (71.6%) were in professional practice. 116 participants (35.5%) earned an income of 15,000,000–29,999,999 VND (658–1315 USD), while 88 (26.9%) earned 7,500,000–14,999,999 VND (329–658 USD).

**Table 1.** General characteristics of participants.

Category	Item	n (%)
Gender	Male	161 (49.2)
	Female	166 (50.8)
Age	19–24	85 (26.0)
	25–29	78 (23.8)
	30–34	85 (26.0)
	35 or above	79 (24.2)
Marital status	Married	218 (66.7)
	Single	105 (32.1)
	Separated	3 (0.9)
	Divorced	1 (0.3)
Education	High school graduate or lower	47 (14.4)
	Junior college graduate	38 (11.6)
	University graduate	224 (68.5)
	Graduate student or higher	18 (5.5)
Occupation	Self-employed	20 (9.8)
	Labor staff	21 (6.4)
	Professional practice	234 (71.6)
	Freelancer	6 (1.8)
	Student	34 (10.4)
Monthly income (VND 100,000) (VND 100,000 = 4.4 USD)	45~<75	45 (13.8)
	75~<150	88 (26.9)
	150~<300	116 (35.5)
	300~<450	54 (16.5)
	450≤	24 (7.3)
Total		327 (100.0)

Exploratory factor analysis and reliability analysis were conducted to examine the overall direction of reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of each measurement item. After excluding items with factor loadings that did not exceed 0.7 in the exploratory factor analysis and the items that significantly hindered the reliability of that analysis, the items shown in Table 2 were used.

**Table 2.** Constructs and measurement items.

Construct		Measurement Item
Family	FCV1	When buying food, I think about my family.
	FCV2	When buying food, my family's opinions matter.
	FCV3	My family's dietary habits affect me.
	FCV4	My healthy dietary habits can protect my family's health as well.
	FCV5	Dining with family is important in my life.
	FCV6	I buy good food for my family even if it is expensive.
Cost-effectiveness	FCV7	When choosing food, I consider taste important.
	FCV8	When buying food, I consider my financial situation.
	FCV9	When buying food, I consider whether it is reasonably priced.
	FCV10	When buying food, I compare price to product quality.
	FCV11	When choosing food, I consider the amount important.
	FCV12	When choosing food, I consider diversity important.
Health	FCV13	When choosing food, I care about the calories.
	FCV14	When choosing food, I consider the fat content.
	FCV15	When choosing food, I care about how it would affect my weight.
	FCV16	When choosing food, I consider the sugar content.
	FCV17	When choosing food, I consider the sodium content.
Safety	FCV18	When choosing food, strict management of food safety is important.
	FCV19	When choosing food, I check whether additives are used.
	FCV20	When choosing food, I consider protection against bacteria or viruses.
	FCV21	When choosing food, I consider whether synthetic substances are added.
	FCV22	When choosing food, I consider protection against food poisoning.
Time Saving	FCV23	I prefer to spend as little time as possible to prepare food.
	FCV24	I prefer food that can be quickly prepared.
	FCV25	It is a waste to spend a long-time preparing food.
	FCV26	I prefer to have some time to myself over preparing food or cleaning up.
Convenience	FCV27	When choosing food, I prefer the ones that are easy to store and keep.
	FCV28	Ideal food is something that I can easily have anytime and anywhere.
	FCV29	I prefer food that is easy to prepare and clean up.
Reliability	1	Korean HMR products are generally excellent.
	2	Korean HMR products are reliable in taste.
	3	Korean HMR products are reliable in quality.
	4	Korean HMR products use safe ingredients.
Intention to Purchase	1	I would like to keep buying and eating Korean HMRS in the future.
	2	I would like to recommend Korean HMRS to families and/or friends.
	3	I would like to say positive things about Korean HMRS to other people.
	4	I would like to buy and eat Korean HMRS, though the price is raised.

The results of the factor analysis and reliability analysis of the ultimately selected items are shown in Table 3. A factor analysis was conducted using varimax rotation, and a reliability analysis was conducted to examine whether Cronbach's  $\alpha$  was above 0.7 [78].



**Table 3.** Exploratory factor analysis and reliability analysis on food consumption values.

	Family	Cost–Effectiveness	Health	Safety	Time Saving	Convenience	Cronbach's $\alpha$
FCV1	0.865	0.107	0.023	0.191	−0.047	0.041	0.918
FCV2	0.854	0.151	0.034	0.111	−0.022	0.134	
FCV3	0.828	0.193	0.132	0.142	−0.038	0.084	
FCV4	0.813	0.085	0.067	0.304	−0.045	0.008	
FCV5	0.808	0.157	0.135	0.192	−0.050	0.063	
FCV6	0.688	0.082	0.148	0.059	0.228	−0.032	
FCV7	0.126	0.811	0.062	0.228	0.059	0.109	0.887
FCV8	0.194	0.804	−0.016	0.179	0.019	0.040	
FCV9	0.185	0.769	0.077	0.306	0.077	0.078	
FCV10	0.071	0.728	0.050	0.361	0.055	0.120	
FCV11	0.120	0.666	0.298	0.104	0.135	0.188	
FCV12	0.121	0.640	0.274	0.057	0.055	0.188	
FCV13	0.043	0.117	0.828	0.022	0.108	0.100	0.891
FCV14	−0.001	0.135	0.810	0.112	0.051	0.189	
FCV15	0.184	0.095	0.797	0.207	0.074	−0.008	
FCV16	0.143	0.066	0.781	0.087	0.104	0.138	
FCV17	0.112	0.113	0.764	0.270	0.043	0.095	
FCV18	0.195	0.296	0.103	0.801	0.045	0.049	0.902
FCV19	0.256	0.273	0.093	0.790	0.060	0.106	
FCV20	0.255	0.259	0.204	0.734	0.008	0.153	
FCV21	0.170	0.165	0.382	0.682	0.056	0.148	
FCV22	0.279	0.292	0.172	0.675	0.027	0.162	
FCV23	−0.011	0.106	0.129	0.016	0.881	0.120	0.835
FCV24	0.000	0.113	−0.020	0.038	0.875	0.106	
FCV25	−0.061	0.003	0.228	−0.064	0.851	0.096	
FCV26	0.068	0.054	0.030	0.146	0.782	0.210	
FCV27	0.053	0.146	0.170	0.149	0.234	0.833	0.821
FCV28	0.086	0.167	0.140	0.119	0.214	0.819	
FCV29	0.102	0.281	0.218	0.187	0.149	0.679	
Eigenvalue	4.45	3.95	3.85	3.48	3.14	2.20	
Variance explained	15.33	13.60	13.15	12.01	10.82	7.59	

Notes: Total variance explained 72.51%, KMO 0.91, KMO and Bartlett's test of sphericity 6485.48, Significance probability was 0.000.

The general convergent and discriminant validity were verified using an exploratory factor analysis (Table 4). Cronbach's  $\alpha$  exceeded 0.8 in all cases, proving that the measurement items were generally reliable. As a result, a total of 29 items were found to be desirable for use in the final analysis, and six values were derived as factors—family, cost-effectiveness, health, safety, time saving, and convenience.

Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted using AMOS 18.0 to verify the unidimensionality of the constructs. The results showed that the overall fit of the model was  $\chi^2_{(607)} = 1256.64$  ( $p < 0.000$ ), CMIN/DF = 2.070, GFI = 0.822, AGFI = 0.794, NFI = 0.863, TLI = 0.916, CFI = 0.924, RMSEA = 0.057, SRMR = 0.064, thereby making them generally satisfactory [79]. Convergent and discriminant validity were also tested. The relationship between the measurement indices and constructs was significant at  $p < 0.05$ , and the average variance extracted (AVE) of the fully standardized factor loading of all items exceeded 0.5, thereby proving convergent validity. The discriminant validity of the constructs was determined by comparing the AVE of each construct with the square root of the correlation among the constructs and checking whether the AVE was greater than the square root. The results show that AVE was greater than the square root of the correlation, as shown in Table 5, thereby proving discriminant validity. Table 5 shows the results of the correlation between the constructs and AVE.

**Table 4.** Exploratory factor analysis and reliability analysis on reliability of Korean HMR and intention to purchase.

	Reliability	Intention to Purchase	Cronbach's $\alpha$
Reliability1	0.818	0.311	0.91
Reliability2	0.808	0.410	
Reliability3	0.799	0.394	
Reliability4	0.810	0.312	
Intention to Purchase1	0.312	0.808	0.91
Intention to Purchase2	0.390	0.808	
Intention to Purchase3	0.360	0.832	
Intention to Purchase4	0.331	0.763	
Eigenvalue	3.11	3.10	
Variance explained	38.83	38.71	

Notes: Total variance explained 77.534%, KMO 0.91, KMO and Bartlett's test of sphericity 1952.263, Significance probability of 0.000.

**Table 5.** Correlation among constructs and AVE (S.E).

Construct	Correlation among Constructs					
	Family Value	Cost-Effectiveness Value	Health Value	Safety Value	Time Saving Value	Convenience Value
Family value	1.00					
Cost-effectiveness value	0.42 (0.04)	1.00				
Health value	0.28 (0.04)	0.36 (0.04)	1.00			
Safety value	0.55 (0.05)	0.68 (0.05)	0.47 (0.04)	1.00		
Time Saving value	0.01 (0.04)	0.21 (0.03)	0.26 (0.04)	0.14 (0.04)	1.00	
Convenience value	0.24 (0.04)	0.47 (0.04)	0.44 (0.05)	0.45 (0.05)	0.45 (0.05)	1.00
AVE	0.68	0.58	0.62	0.66	0.68	0.64
Composite reliability for latent constructs	0.88	0.84	0.84	0.81	0.88	0.76

This study measured the constructs as multiple items to increase reliability and analyzed the research model using covariance structure modeling to verify the relationships. As a result of the modeling to test Hypotheses 1 through 7, the overall fit of the model was  $\chi^2_{(607)} = 1256.64$  ( $p < 0.000$ ), CMIN/DF = 2.070, GFI = 0.822, AGFI = 0.794, NFI = 0.863, TLI = 0.916, CFI = 0.924, RMSEA = 0.057, and SRMR = 0.064, thereby proving the analysis to be generally satisfactory [79]. The results of testing Hypotheses 1 through 7 are presented in Table 6.

Among the food consumption values, health, safety, time saving, and convenience value had a positive effect on the reliability of Korean HMRs, but family value and cost-effectiveness value did not affect reliability. Nevertheless, the reliability of Korean HMRs had a positive effect on the intention to purchase Korean HMRs.

**Table 6.** Results of testing Hypotheses 1–7.

Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	C.R.	Result
H1. Family value → reliability	0.09	1.57	Rejected
H2. Cost-effectiveness value → reliability	0.06	0.69	Rejected
H3. Health value → reliability	0.18 **	2.79	Accepted
H4. Safety value → reliability	0.22 *	2.48	Accepted
H5. Time-saving value → reliability	0.13 *	2.07	Accepted
H6. Convenience value → reliability	0.29 ***	4.08	Accepted
H7. Reliability → intention to purchase	0.76 ***	12.91	Accepted

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

## 5. Discussion and Conclusions

### 5.1. Discussion

This study analyzed the Vietnamese HMR market, where limited research is available despite the growth of this market. In particular, it is meaningful in that it broadens our understanding of Vietnamese consumers by analyzing their food consumption values and identifies and predicts HMR consumption behavior through this. For these reasons it could have a positive impact on other researchers and experts in food-related fields, including HMR, in terms of expanding our approach to consumer research in the Vietnamese food market.

The effect of Vietnamese consumers' food consumption values on Korean HMR reliability and the effect of Korean HMR reliability on the intention to purchase Korean HMR were investigated in this study. The results showed that, among the food consumption values, health, safety, time saving, and convenience had a positive effect on the reliability of Korean HMRS, while family and cost-effectiveness did not affect reliability. Moreover, the reliability of Korean HMRS had a positive effect on the intention to purchase.

According to Hauser et al. [80], convenience had a positive effect on attitudes toward HMR products and purchase intention, but price did not have a significant effect on attitudes in Swiss subjects. Their finding supports the results of this study. However, Kim et al. [52] discovered that among the HMR selection attributes, health, price, and convenience had a positive effect on reliability, while Choi and Hong [81] stated that taste-oriented, health-oriented, and economy-oriented lifestyles had a positive effect on brand reliability. Both studies on Koreans showed similar results to this study in terms of health and convenience, but contradictory results were found for price and economic feasibility. These results are considered to be due to the changing characteristics of consumers by country, and it seems necessary to analyze the differences in the factors according to countries and cultures as well as in terms of prices and economics where these differences occur.

Meanwhile, Kim and Ryu [82] revealed that functional values, including the price, taste, and amount of HMR, and social values, such as safety, had a positive effect on satisfaction, which consequently had a positive effect on reliability. Park and Jang [83], who examined packaged meals in convenience stores, found that belief in taste, convenience, sanitation, and the brand affected purchase bias, which then had a positive effect on purchase intention. Similar to previous studies, hygiene and safety were found to be major influencing factors on HMR reliability in this study. Food hygiene and safety issues are expected to grow in importance due to COVID-19. This study was conducted before the spread of COVID-19, and additional research is needed because a change in consumer food consumption value is predicted after the spread of COVID-19.

Ganesan et al. [84] and Margariti [85] also observed that brand attitudes towards instant food affected purchase intentions, which is consistent with the results of this study, proving that there is a clear relationship between values, trust, and purchase intention relating to HMR products. In summary, it is essential to understand the food consumption values that affect HMR reliability in consideration of various backgrounds, including countries and cultures. In addition, it is necessary to devise a way to increase the reliability by considering the clear influence relationship that reliability has on the intention to

purchase food items. The results of this study can thus be used as a reference for future research in Vietnam and can be used to catalyze the growth of Korean HMR products in the Vietnamese market.

### 5.2. Theoretical Contributions

Changes such as economic development, reduced family and individual population structures, and an increase in female social participation are increasing the consumption of HMRs among Vietnamese consumers [11–16]. However, given the limited number of studies on the Vietnamese HMR market, the results of this study could be considered as pioneering this area of research.

The Vietnamese HMR market is expected to show continuous growth, and HMR in Vietnam is likely to be established as a typical form of meal solution somewhere between home meals and dining out. In a changing food market such as Vietnam's, it is necessary to identify the factors affecting food consumption to determine attitudes toward food as well as purchase intention. In particular, personal values are factors that affect individual attitudes and behaviors [28] and similar attitudes and behaviors regarding food [23,31]. Therefore, determining the value system related to food consumption among various value factors is the best way to explain food attitudes and purchase intentions. Accordingly, this study determined how the various food consumption values of Vietnamese consumers affects the reliability of Korean HMRs and how this reliability relates to the intention to purchase.

The effect of family values on food consumption values were analyzed along with health, safety, time saving, convenience, and cost-effectiveness. Family value is a factor that reflects the fact that individual attitudes and behaviors are greatly affected by the family due to the cultural background of Vietnam [39–41]. Although the effect of family value was analyzed in light of this cultural background, the results of the study revealed that family value did not affect the reliability of Korean HMRs. This may be because Korean HMR products do not directly bear on the family values of Vietnamese consumers. This also implies the need to conduct further research to determine how family values affect the reliability and attitudes toward Korean HMRs, as well as any additional factors that might also have an impact.

### 5.3. Managerial Implications

This study can provide practical insights regarding entry into the Vietnamese HMR market and how to secure competitiveness. First, it is necessary to identify the consumption values that reflect the characteristics of the target market when trying to enter overseas HMR markets. Since the food consumption values of consumers are affected by their sociocultural background, stage of life, and life experience [37,38], there may be a difference in food consumption values among countries. Moreover, differences in eating culture may also affect the formation of food consumption values. Overlooking these differences when entering overseas HMR markets may result in failure if products that do not fulfill consumer values or meet market demands are released. Therefore, it is necessary to first identify the characteristics of the overseas HMR markets it is desired to enter and, when selecting items to release, determine whether the values of those items coincide with local consumer values. Furthermore, there should be marketing strategies that help communities meet the food consumption values of Vietnamese consumers.

Second, constant management and improvement of attributes such as health, safety, time saving, and convenience are needed to increase the reliability of Korean HMRs. As these four food consumption values of Vietnamese consumers affect the reliability and intention to purchase Korean HMRs, it is desirable to develop products that comply with the attributes of these food consumption values to secure their competitiveness in the Vietnamese HMR market.

#### 5.4. Limitations and Further Research

While this study may be considered as a pioneering study of the acceptance of Korean HMRs among Vietnamese consumers, it does have limitations. Although the study was conducted on consumers who had experience in consuming Korean HMRs, it was not fully considered that there may be differences depending on the degree of experience in using Korean HMRs and the subject of this study cannot represent all Vietnamese consumers. Therefore, to secure generalization validity, follow-up studies should be conducted by classifying the degree of Korean HMR use experience for a sufficient sample. In this study, research analysis was performed only on samples with experience in using Korean HMRs. However, even for consumers without experience in using Korean HMRs, the reliability and intention to purchase these HMRs can be formed by various influencing factors, so an analysis of these should be carried out.

In addition, the effect of food consumption value on intention to purchase Korean HMRs and the mediating effect of reliability were not analyzed. Moreover, there may be additional factors aside from food consumption values that may affect the reliability and intention to purchase Korean HMRs. Therefore, it is necessary to further analyze the relationships between the reliability of Korean production, satisfaction with the products, intention to purchase, and word-of-mouth messages, by studying additional factors such as the perception and image of Korean HMRs. In particular, considering that Vietnamese interest in Korea and Korean food is increasing due to the Korean Wave (hallyu) [27], it is essential to conduct a study on the influence of Hallyu on Korean HMR consumption behavior.

Furthermore, considering the market conditions in which the types and distribution of HMRs are being diversified, it is also necessary to analyze the differences in food consumption values depending on product type and distribution channel, as well as their effect on reliability and purchase intentions. By increasing our understanding of HMR management factors, points of improvement, and other relationships, the results of this study can be used as basic data for the future development of Korean HMRs.

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