



Active Seniors' Engagement with Dietary Supplements; Exploring Repurchase and Advocacy Behaviors



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ABSTRACT

Aims This study empirically examined the effects of psychological and social values on repurchase and recommendation intentions regarding dietary supplement consumption among active seniors in an aging society, and explored their implications for health promotion and social participation among older adults.

Instrument & Methods This cross-sectional study was conducted with 513 active seniors aged 55-75 in South Korea. A questionnaire was developed based on validated scales measuring selection attributes, psychological factors, repurchase intention, and recommendation intention. Multiple regression analyses were conducted to examine the key factors influencing consumer behavior.

Findings Functional value exerted the strongest influence ($\beta=0.402$ for repurchase intention and $\beta=0.294$ for recommendation intention) among selection attributes and psychological factors. Repurchase intention was found to significantly predict recommendation intention ($t=13.056$, $p<0.001$), suggesting that consumption experiences promote positive word-of-mouth and the diffusion of health-promoting behaviors.

Conclusion Active seniors' consumption of dietary supplements is shaped by the complex interplay among trust, functional reliability, psychological satisfaction, and social recognition.

Keywords Patient Advocacy; Dietary Supplements; Health Promotion; Social Behavior

CITATION LINKS

[1] World population ageing ... [2] The promotion of active aging through older adult education in the context of ... [3] The expanding consumer power of active seniors over the next ... [4] Analysis of senior citizens' participation in ... [5] "Where should we eat?": How health consciousness moderates the influences driving intentions to purchase ... [6] Vitamin-Mineral Supplement Use Patterns in Elderly Koreans: Data from the 2007-2008 Korean National Health and Nutrition ... [7] Health habits and other characteristics of dietary supplement ... [8] Online book shopping in Vietnam: The impact of the COVID-19 ... [9] Dietary supplement use was very high among older adults in the United States in ... [10] Consumer perceived value: The development of a multiple ... [11] Customer perceived value: A comprehensive ... [12] Why we buy what we buy: A theory of ... [13] Examining quality, value, satisfaction and trust dimensions: An empirical lens to understand health insurance systems ... [14] A cognitive model of the antecedents and consequences of ... [15] Why recommend? Unlocking the factors and configurations influencing word-of-mouth intentions in continuing care ... [16] The effect of online customer experience towards ... [17] How does in-store and online shopping experiences influence repurchase intentions in Shandong, China? Roles of perceived value, brand trust, and ... [18] How brand experience and perceived value drive word-of-mouth and repurchase intention in ... [19] What gets shared, and why? Interpersonal communication and ... [20] Relationship between the quality of formal care and family caregivers' positive and negative aspects of caregiving for older patients with ... [21] Consumer behavior in later life: Current knowledge, issues, and new ... [22] Efficacy of video game-based interventions for active aging: A systematic literature review and ... [23] An ecological framework for active ... [24] Multivariate data ... [25] Enhancing repurchase intention on digital platforms based on shopping well-being through shopping value, trust and ... [26] Attitude, repurchase intention and brand loyalty toward ... [27] Analysis of the role of self-efficacy and interpersonal relationships in the relationship between subjective family socio-economic status and college students' trust character: A case study of a university in Shaanxi ... [28] The importance of positive word-of-mouth (PWOM) in leisure services consumption by ... [29] Relative persuasiveness of repurchase intentions versus recommendations in ... [30] The effect of word-of-mouth on consumer emotions and choice: Findings from a ...

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Introduction

As the issue of population aging emerges as a global concern, South Korea's rapid transition into a super-aged society has drawn significant social and economic attention [1]. With continuous advancements in medical and scientific technology, human life expectancy has increased, leading to a redefinition of what constitutes "older adults." In contrast to earlier generations, who typically withdrew from social and economic activities after retirement, today's adults in their 50s and 60s continue to engage actively in various aspects of life. This shift has given rise to a new demographic group known as active seniors, defined as individuals aged 50 and above who remain physically healthy and actively participate in social, economic, and cultural activities [2, 3].

Active seniors primarily belong to the baby boomer generation, which experienced a period of rapid economic growth and benefited from material prosperity, higher levels of education, and advancements in medical technology. Whereas the previous "silver generation" was often characterized by limited economic capacity and passive participation in social activities after retirement, active seniors pursue a dynamic and autonomous lifestyle, positioning themselves as a central force in the modern consumer economy based on their financial stability [4]. Rather than focusing merely on survival, this generation emphasizes quality of life (QOL) and seeks to maintain a fulfilling and meaningful existence. Unlike earlier older adults, active seniors demonstrate higher levels of self-efficacy, digital literacy, and a strong motivation to sustain social relationships. These characteristics distinguish them as a unique group of health-conscious consumers, exhibiting distinct patterns of behavior shaped by psychological empowerment and social engagement [5].

As the consumption of dietary supplements has gained prominence as a means of health promotion and self-management, the interest and spending of active seniors in this sector have also intensified [6]. While traditional approaches to health maintenance focused primarily on balanced diets and physical exercise, many older adults are now turning toward more convenient and technology-assisted methods to sustain their well-being. This behavioral shift has been facilitated by the rise in digital literacy among seniors, increased exposure to diverse health information, and greater financial capacity, all of which have improved access to a wide range of functional foods and supplements [7].

The COVID-19 pandemic further heightened public awareness of health management, drawing attention to the role of nutrition and supplementation in strengthening immunity and preventing disease. In this context, the consumption of dietary supplements has become not merely a nutritional choice but an

integral part of daily health routines aimed at achieving healthy aging and well-being. Maintaining good health functions as a vital resource—not only for personal growth and independence but also for broader social and economic development. Consequently, the perception of health as a form of capital continues to expand, leading an increasing number of individuals to integrate dietary supplements into their lifestyles to enhance resilience and QOL [8, 9].

In consumer behavior research, perceived values and selection attributes have long been recognized as key determinants of purchasing decisions [10]. Perceived values encompass functional, psychological, and social dimensions, which collectively shape how consumers evaluate and select products. These dimensions reflect the underlying consumer psychology, as individuals assess both tangible and intangible aspects of value during the decision-making process [11].

For dietary supplements in particular, product efficacy is not immediately observable, and safety or reliability cannot be easily verified through direct experience. As such, selection attributes, especially reliability, become critical determinants of consumer choice [12]. Trust operates as a psychological construct reflecting the belief that a product will deliver effective and satisfactory outcomes, reinforcing both confidence and loyalty in consumption [13].

According to Oliver's expectancy-disconfirmation theory [14], satisfaction is shaped by the degree of congruence between a consumer's expectations and actual product performance, which, in turn, leads to behavioral loyalty, such as repurchase and recommendation intentions. Similarly, Sheth *et al.*'s [12] theory of consumption values posits that functional, psychological, and social values jointly influence purchasing behavior. Recent studies further suggest that these value dimensions not only act as independent predictors but also interact synergistically to affect recommendation intentions in complex ways [15].

Pasharibu *et al.* [16] define repurchase intention as the likelihood that consumers will repeatedly purchase or use a product or service they have previously experienced. They emphasize that maintaining repurchase intention plays a vital role in sustaining long-term consumption relationships. When consumers are satisfied with key factors such as design, price, and convenience in the purchasing process, they are more likely to form a positive attitude toward repurchasing. This not only reduces corporate marketing costs but also strengthens brand equity by reinforcing consumer trust and loyalty [17].

Through this process, brand loyalty generated by positive experiences encourages repetitive consumption and fosters social sharing behaviors.

According to Le *et al.* [18], both brand experience and consumer psychology have significant positive effects on word-of-mouth (WOM) communication and repurchase intention, leading to indirect advertising and enhanced purchasing effects. Such recommendation behaviors stimulate curiosity and engagement among others, facilitating social interaction and reinforcing a sense of social recognition and self-esteem among community members [19].

However, previous studies on consumer behavior have primarily focused on the general adult population, with relatively limited attention given to the active senior group, defined as older adults who remain autonomous, health-conscious, and socially engaged. Empirical research exploring the relationships among consumer psychology, selection attributes, and behavioral outcomes such as repurchase and recommendation intentions within this demographic remains scarce [20]. Although earlier studies have suggested that individuals' health consciousness influences their purchasing of health-related products, few have empirically examined how specific selection attributes (e.g., convenience, reliability) and dimensions of consumer psychology, including functional, psychological, and social values, interact to shape repurchase and recommendation behaviors for dietary supplements [12].

Given the growing importance of active seniors as a major consumer group in aging societies, research focusing on this population is both timely and essential. Beyond their role as consumers, understanding their health-related consumption behaviors provides foundational insights for developing tailored health education programs and product strategies that promote active aging and sustainable well-being [21].

This study aimed to empirically examine how psychological and social value perceptions of dietary supplements influence repurchase and recommendation intentions among active seniors, as well as to explore the interrelationship between these constructs. In aging societies, such as South Korea, the health behaviors and well-being-oriented consumption patterns of active seniors are closely linked to broader social and economic sustainability [22, 23]. Within this context, the study sought to identify the psychological determinants underlying dietary supplement consumption in later life, thereby providing empirical evidence to support the design of effective health promotion strategies for older adults. Furthermore, by investigating the health-related consumption and behavioral patterns of Korean active seniors, this research offers international implications for addressing common challenges faced by global aging societies, such as promoting health, encouraging social participation, and fostering self-managed health practices. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of evidence-based

health education and promotion policies worldwide. Ultimately, this study advances existing gerontological research by empirically elucidating the connection between personal and social value perceptions and dietary supplement consumption behaviors among active seniors, a uniquely proactive and health-conscious consumer group.

Instrument and Methods

Design

This cross-sectional survey-based quantitative study was conducted on 513 participants from April 3 to April 11, 2025, targeting active seniors aged 55 to 75 residing in South Korea. Participants were adults who had prior experience consuming dietary supplements, and data were collected via a structured questionnaire. A total of 513 valid responses were obtained, exceeding the minimum recommended sample size of 100 for multiple regression analysis, thereby ensuring statistical adequacy and reliability [24].

Instrument

The questionnaire was developed and adapted based on the well-established PERVAL scale by Sweeney and Soutar to assess selection attributes and consumer psychology. The measurement items were modified to ensure conceptual relevance and cultural applicability within the context of dietary supplement consumption among active seniors. Repurchase intention was conceptualized following Oliver's [14] expectancy-disconfirmation theory and Sheth *et al.*'s [12] theory of consumption values, assuming that consumer psychology influences repurchase behavior both directly and indirectly through satisfaction and the formation of perceived value.

Data collection

All participants signed an informed consent form and could cancel their participation at any time during the study, in accordance with the Helsinki II declaration. All participants took part on a voluntary basis and were not remunerated for their participation. Participants were fully informed of the study's purpose and procedures. All collected data were used exclusively for academic research purposes, and participants' personal information was kept strictly confidential.

The survey was administered using a combination of online Google Surveys and offline paper questionnaires, conducted in accordance with the ethical principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki. Given that some senior participants faced challenges using digital devices, trained survey assistants provided face-to-face support for completing the online questionnaire or offered an alternative paper-based survey. All survey items, except for demographic questions, were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" (1 point) to "strongly agree" (5 points).

Statistical analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS 28. Both simple regression and multiple regression analyses were performed to examine the relationships among the study parameters. Statistical significance was assessed at the $p < 0.05$ and $p < 0.001$ levels.

Findings

The participants consisted of 513 active seniors, including 199 men (38.8%) and 314 women (61.2%). Regarding age distribution, 178 participants (34.7%) were aged 70–75 years, 170 (33.1%) were aged 60–69 years, and 165 (32.2%) were aged 50–59 years.

The designed model to examine the effects of selection attributes and consumer psychology on repurchase intention explained approximately 52.8% of the variance in repurchase intention ($R^2 = 0.528$) and was statistically significant ($F = 115.734$, $p < 0.001$). The variance inflation factor (VIF) values ranged from 1.412 to 2.088, which is below the threshold of 10, indicating no multicollinearity among the independent parameters. The Durbin-Watson statistic was 1.790, close to 2, confirming the independence of residuals assumption.

Reliability, a subfactor of selection attributes ($t = 4.149$, $p < 0.001$), and two subfactors of consumer psychology—functional value ($t = 9.328$, $p < 0.001$) and psychological value ($t = 4.977$, $p < 0.001$)—had significant positive effects on repurchase intention. Among these predictors, functional value ($\beta = 0.402$) had the strongest influence, followed by psychological value ($\beta = 0.218$) and reliability

($\beta = 0.158$; Table 1).

The model to examine the effects of selection attributes and consumer psychology on recommendation intention explained approximately 47.8% of the variance in recommendation intention ($R^2 = 0.478$) and was statistically significant ($F = 94.615$, $p < 0.001$). The VIF ranged from 1.412 to 2.088, which is below the critical value of 10, indicating no multicollinearity among the independent parameters. The Durbin-Watson statistic was 1.888, close to 2, confirming the independence of residuals assumption.

Reliability, a subfactor of selection attributes ($t = 4.379$, $p < 0.001$), and three subfactors of consumer psychology—functional value ($t = 6.481$, $p < 0.001$), psychological value ($t = 3.589$, $p < 0.001$), and social value ($t = 4.304$, $p < 0.001$)—had significant positive effects on recommendation intention. Among these, functional value ($\beta = 0.294$) had the strongest influence, followed by social value ($\beta = 0.188$), reliability ($\beta = 0.175$), and psychological value ($\beta = 0.166$; Table 2).

A regression analysis was conducted to examine the effect of repurchase intention on recommendation intention. The model explained approximately 58.5% of the variance in recommendation intention ($R^2 = 0.585$) and was statistically significant ($F = 361.248$, $p < 0.001$). The VIF was 2.062, which is below the critical threshold of 10, indicating no multicollinearity among the parameters. The Durbin-Watson statistic was 1.825, close to 2, confirming the assumption of independence of residuals. Repurchase intention had a significant positive effect on recommendation intention ($t = 13.056$, $p < 0.001$).

Table 1. Effects of selection attributes and consumer psychology on repurchase intention

Parameter	B unstandardized coefficient	Standard error	β standardized coefficient	t
Convenience	0.063	0.033	0.068	1.884*
Reliability	0.126	0.030	0.158	4.149**
Functional value	0.449	0.048	0.402	9.328**
Psychological value	0.184	0.037	0.218	4.977**
Social value	0.044	0.031	0.059	1.414*

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.001$

Table 2. Effects of selection attributes and consumer psychology on recommendation intention

Parameter	B unstandardized coefficient	Standard error	β standardized coefficient	t
Convenience	0.075	0.041	0.069	1.818*
Reliability	0.164	0.037	0.175	4.379**
Functional value	0.386	0.059	0.294	6.481**
Psychological value	0.164	0.046	0.166	3.589**
Social value	0.166	0.039	0.188	4.304**

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.001$

Discussion

This study aimed to examine how psychological and social value perceptions of dietary supplements influence repurchase and recommendation intentions among active seniors. It empirically demonstrated that, within an aging society, the consumption behavior of active seniors regarding dietary supplements is significantly influenced by

psychological and social values, which have been previously overlooked in the literature. The findings highlight that these intangible value perceptions play a decisive role in shaping both repurchase intention and recommendation intention, suggesting that emotional and relational motivations are as critical as functional factors in understanding senior consumers' health-related decision-making.

First, three factors were found to exert relatively stronger effects on repurchase intention for dietary supplements. In particular, among the selection attributes, reliability emerged as the most influential driver, reflecting consumers' confidence in product quality, safety, and efficacy. This finding is consistent with the results of Tan *et al.*, who demonstrated that trust and shopping value significantly enhance consumers' purchase and repurchase intentions, reinforcing the essential role of perceived reliability in consumer decision-making [25]. Moreover, this result aligns with the concept of brand loyalty, suggesting that products with higher social credibility are more likely to be repurchased by consumers [26].

Within the domain of consumer psychology, not only functional value but also psychological satisfaction significantly influenced repurchase intention. The enhancement of self-efficacy and self-esteem indicates that supplement consumption extends beyond utilitarian behavior; it contributes to the formation of a positive self-identity. Furthermore, this psychological satisfaction develops into a multidimensional value that fosters positive social interactions and trust within interpersonal relationships, as suggested by Song & Zhao, who emphasize the mediating role of self-efficacy and interpersonal trust in shaping prosocial behavior and relational cohesion [27].

The overall explanatory power of the model reached approximately 53.3%, indicating a high level of predictive accuracy. These findings demonstrate that active seniors prioritize three interrelated dimensions—trust, functional efficacy, and psychological satisfaction—when selecting and repurchasing dietary supplements. This underscores important implications for the development of targeted marketing strategies and health education programs aimed at promoting sustained health management behaviors among the aging population. Second, the key factors influencing recommendation intention were identified as reliability, functional value, psychological value, and social value. Functional value reflects the perceived health benefits and practical efficacy of dietary supplements, while social value explains how supplement consumption extends beyond personal satisfaction to reinforce social norms and positive attitudes within communities [5]. Active seniors' relative economic stability and high levels of social engagement amplify this effect. Having experienced tangible health improvements through supplement use, they tend to actively share and advocate for their experiences within their social circles. This behavior forms a positive linkage between recommendation intention and WOM communication, highlighting the role of active seniors as influential agents in promoting health-related consumption. This finding aligns with research on Brazilian older consumers, where positive word-of-mouth (PWOM) is found to

play a key role in expanding social networks and promoting recommendation behaviors [28].

Finally, there was strong and direct positive association between repurchase intention and recommendation intention. This finding supports the notion that trust and psychological satisfaction derived from product use do not end with repeated purchasing behavior but extend into social sharing and advocacy actions. This result is consistent with prior research conducted in the context of online reviews, demonstrating that recommendation intentions exert a stronger persuasive and social influence than repurchase intentions [29]. In other words, as active seniors accumulate positive experiences and trust toward a particular product, they naturally exhibit a stronger tendency to recommend that product or brand to others. This finding, as evidenced in the study by Martensen & Grønholdt, indicates that WOM directly influences consumers' emotional responses and choice behaviors and further extends its impact to social consumption practices and the promotion of community health [30].

We empirically verified that active seniors' consumption of dietary supplements is shaped by a complex interaction of functional reliability, psychological value, and the desire for social recognition within interpersonal relationships. This multidimensional structure provides strong evidence that health management behaviors among older adults are not merely economic choices but extend to health-promoting practices that reinforce self-efficacy, social belonging, and overall well-being.

Our findings provide practical guidance for developing health promotion and health education strategies targeting active seniors in aging societies. Focusing on the key factors identified (functional reliability, psychological value, and social value), this section outlines integrated implications for policy, education, industry, and research. Establishing trust and evidence-based systems is essential and requires a multi-sector approach. Active seniors are highly sensitive to the functional reliability of dietary supplements; therefore, collaboration among governments, public health institutions, industries, and research organizations is necessary to build a transparent and scientifically validated information ecosystem. From a policy perspective, authorities should standardize ingredient labeling, clinical evidence, and safety information while ensuring that such data are easily accessible and comprehensible to older adults.

The industry should enhance brand communication centered on transparency, reliability, and social contribution, while research institutions should utilize real-world data to verify product efficacy, usage patterns, and changes in QOL, thereby providing evidence to support policy and educational frameworks. Such a multilayered cooperative system can help reduce the dissemination of misinformation,

strengthen consumer trust, and promote autonomous health management behaviors among the elderly.

Furthermore, behaviorally supportive education and community-based strategies should be developed to enhance psychological and social values among active seniors. The consumption of dietary supplements should be approached not merely as a purchasing behavior but as a health-practice experience that reinforces self-efficacy and social recognition.

Participatory health education programs implemented through local public health centers or senior welfare centers should integrate goal setting, supplement intake management, and self-monitoring training to strengthen older adults' self-management capacity and sense of achievement. At the same time, peer-based senior communities, well-being groups, and online forums should be utilized to facilitate experience sharing and mutual encouragement. This will reinforce trust networks around dietary supplements and promote positive WOM behavior. Additionally, digital literacy education should be provided to enable seniors to maintain active social engagement online, supporting their participation in broader social interactions.

Such an integrated framework of educational and social support systems can extend beyond individual psychological satisfaction to promote social belonging and positive relationships, serving as an effective health promotion model that sustains healthy behavioral changes over time. Ultimately, this multidimensional approach fosters autonomy and sustainability in health behaviors among older adults, contributing to the development of a more robust social foundation for health promotion and well-being.

Conclusion

Active seniors' consumption of dietary supplements is not merely a purchasing behavior but rather a comprehensive health-promoting practice that integrates functional reliability, psychological efficacy, and social recognition.

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