

# The Impact of E-CRM Dimensions on Repurchase Intention and E-WOM: The Mediating Role of Relationship Quality in Online Shopping Platforms

Lingli Du\*

*Graduate School of International Studies, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Seoul, South Korea*

*\*Corresponding Author*

**Abstract:** This study examines how multidimensional electronic customer relationship management (e-CRM) influences repurchase intention and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) through the mediating role of relationship quality in online shopping platforms. Building on relationship marketing and digital interaction perspectives, e-CRM is conceptualized as a higher-order construct comprising e-marketing, e-sales, e-service, e-community, and e-security. Relationship quality is operationalized through trust, satisfaction, and commitment. Using survey data from 306 online consumers and a combination of reliability analysis, factor analysis, and structural testing, the results show that e-CRM significantly enhances trust, satisfaction, and commitment. These relationship quality dimensions, in turn, positively influence both repurchase intention and e-WOM. Regression-based mediation results further indicate that relationship quality partially transmits the effects of e-CRM on post-purchase behaviors. The study contributes to the literature by clarifying the relational pathways through which digital customer management practices shape behavioral outcomes in online shopping environments.

**Keywords:** e-CRM; Relationship Quality; Trust; Satisfaction; Commitment; Repurchase Intention; e-WOM; Online Shopping Platforms

## 1. Introduction

The rapid diffusion of internet technologies, smartphones, and platform-based business models has transformed the way firms initiate, manage, and sustain customer relationships [1, 2]. In online shopping environments, consumers no longer interact with firms through a single channel. Instead, their experiences are shaped by

an integrated set of digital touchpoints, including promotional messages, search and transaction functions, customer service systems, community features, and privacy or security protections. These mechanisms collectively define how customers perceive a platform and whether they are willing to continue engaging with it.

This transformation has made electronic customer relationship management (e-CRM) a strategically important capability [3, 4]. Compared with traditional CRM, e-CRM operates in an environment characterized by higher information transparency, lower switching costs, and more immediate consumer feedback. Customers can compare prices, read reviews, and move across competing platforms with minimal effort. As a result, digital platforms cannot rely solely on short-term transactions or promotional incentives. They must build stronger relational bonds that encourage customers to remain, repurchase, and advocate for the platform in the long run.

Although prior studies recognize the importance of e-CRM, many treat it as a general technological or managerial system. This aggregated view is analytically convenient, but it obscures the fact that e-CRM is inherently multidimensional [5,6]. Online marketing communication, transaction support, service responsiveness, interactive community functions, and security assurance are not identical mechanisms. Each may influence consumers through different psychological pathways and may contribute differently to the formation of trust, satisfaction, and commitment.

At the same time, relationship quality has become one of the most important constructs for explaining customer behavior in digital commerce. In online environments, customers face uncertainty related to product performance, service fulfillment, privacy, and transaction security. Under such conditions, trust reduces perceived risk, satisfaction reflects positive

evaluation of the shopping experience, and commitment captures the willingness to maintain an ongoing relationship. Together, these dimensions represent the strength of the customer–platform relationship and provide a plausible explanatory mechanism linking e-CRM practices to post-purchase outcomes.

Among post-purchase outcomes, repurchase intention and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) are especially important. Repurchase intention reflects continued behavioral loyalty, while e-WOM represents customers' willingness to voluntarily recommend a platform, share positive experiences, and influence other consumers in digital spaces. Both outcomes matter for the sustainable performance of online platforms because customer retention and advocacy reduce acquisition costs and strengthen competitive positioning.

Against this background, the present study develops and tests an integrated model in which five e-CRM dimensions influence relationship quality, which in turn affects repurchase intention and e-WOM. By preserving the multidimensional nature of e-CRM and explicitly modeling relationship quality as a mediating mechanism, this study seeks to provide a more precise explanation of how digital customer management practices translate into post-purchase behavioral outcomes.

## 2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

Customer relationship management has long been understood as a strategic approach aimed at attracting, maintaining, and enhancing long-term customer relationships. With the expansion of online marketplaces and digital communication systems, CRM has evolved into e-CRM, which uses internet-based interfaces, data systems, and interactive technologies to manage customer relationships in real time. In digital settings, relationship management is no longer limited to sales support. It now encompasses personalized communication, intelligent service, transaction convenience, community interaction, and security assurance.

In this study, e-CRM is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct consisting of five dimensions. First, e-marketing refers to the use of digital channels such as mobile notifications, targeted promotions, or personalized information to communicate with customers. When communication is relevant and timely, it can

strengthen perceptions of responsiveness and customer orientation [7]. Second, e-sales refers to transactional support functions such as purchasing convenience, access to records, price comparison, and procedural efficiency [8]. These elements reduce cognitive effort and support favorable shopping experiences.

Third, e-service captures the platform's ability to provide effective support before, during, and after a transaction [9]. Online consultation, refund policies, complaint handling, and after-sales assistance are important because they shape whether customers perceive a platform as reliable and helpful. Fourth, e-community reflects interactive and participatory features that allow customers to exchange information, review products, or communicate within the platform environment [10, 11]. Such features can enhance emotional attachment and social engagement. Fifth, e-security refers to privacy protection, safe payment systems, account protection, and visible safeguards against digital threats [12]. Because perceived security is a prerequisite for trust in online environments, this dimension is especially central to relational stability.

Relationship quality is generally defined as the overall strength of the relationship between exchange partners. In online shopping settings, the construct is typically represented by trust, satisfaction, and commitment. Trust refers to customers' confidence that a platform is honest, competent, and dependable [13-15]. Satisfaction captures customers' overall affective evaluation of their shopping experiences and whether expectations are met or exceeded. Commitment reflects a durable willingness to continue the relationship despite the availability of alternatives [16, 17]. In digital markets with low switching costs, these relational dimensions are critical because customers can move to competing platforms whenever they perceive inconvenience, risk, or dissatisfaction.

The literature suggests that e-CRM should positively influence all three dimensions of relationship quality. Personalized communication and transparent processes help customers perceive the platform as responsive and fair. Service quality and rapid problem resolution increase confidence that the platform can be trusted. Community interaction can deepen engagement and identification, while strong security protections reduce perceived vulnerability. Taken together, these mechanisms

indicate that higher-quality e-CRM should lead customers to feel more trust, greater satisfaction, and stronger commitment.

H1: e-CRM positively influences trust in online shopping platforms.

H2: e-CRM positively influences customer satisfaction in online shopping platforms.

H3: e-CRM positively influences customer commitment in online shopping platforms.

The literature also indicates that relationship quality should influence post-purchase outcomes. Trust reduces uncertainty and encourages repeated transactions because customers become more comfortable with future exchanges. Satisfaction promotes continued usage because positive experiences create favorable evaluations of the platform [18]. Commitment reflects a longer-term relational intention and often reduces switching even when alternatives are available. In addition, customers with stronger relational bonds are more likely to recommend a platform and engage in favorable e-WOM because they are willing to express and defend their positive evaluations in public digital environments [19, 20].

H4: Relationship quality positively influences repurchase intention in online shopping platforms.

H5: Relationship quality positively influences e-WOM in online shopping platforms.

Based on the foregoing discussion, the study proposes that e-CRM affects repurchase intention and e-WOM indirectly through relationship quality. This framework integrates digital relationship management theory with relationship marketing theory and clarifies the psychological mechanism through which platform capabilities are converted into customer behavior.

### 3. Methodology

This study employs a quantitative research design based on survey data collected from consumers with prior online shopping experience. The objective is to examine whether multidimensional e-CRM improves relationship quality and whether relationship quality subsequently explains repurchase intention and e-WOM. Measurement items were adapted from established studies in electronic commerce, customer experience, and relationship marketing, and were revised to fit the context of online shopping platforms.

e-CRM was specified as a higher-order construct

consisting of five dimensions: e-marketing, e-sales, e-service, e-community, and e-security. A total of 13 items were used to capture these dimensions. Relationship quality was modeled using three first-order constructs: trust (five items), satisfaction (four items), and commitment (five items). Repurchase intention was measured using three items, and e-WOM intention was measured using five items. All items were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

The questionnaire was developed in three stages. First, established measurement items were adapted to the online shopping platform context. Second, a pilot test with online shopping users was conducted to improve clarity and eliminate ambiguous wording. Third, the final instrument was organized into three sections: demographic information, e-CRM items, and relationship quality plus post-purchase behavior items. To reduce common method bias, respondents were informed that the survey was anonymous and confidential.

Data were collected through a structured survey. A total of 322 questionnaires were distributed, 310 were returned, and 306 valid responses were retained after removing incomplete or careless cases. The valid response rate was 95.0%. The final sample size exceeds the minimum threshold generally recommended for structural equation modeling and provides a sufficient empirical basis for reliability, validity, and structural testing.

The sample is dominated by active online shopping users. Among the 306 respondents, 41.2% were male and 58.8% were female. Respondents in their twenties accounted for 49.5%, followed by those in their thirties, while smaller proportions were observed in older age groups. More than half of the sample held or were pursuing a university degree, indicating a relatively well-educated consumer group. The largest income category was 3,000–5,000 RMB per month, which is consistent with the spending profile of mainstream online shopping users.

Data analysis proceeded in four stages using SPSS 18.0 and AMOS 18.0. First, descriptive statistics and reliability analyses were performed. Second, exploratory factor analysis assessed the dimensional structure of the measures. Third, confirmatory factor analysis examined model fit and construct validity. Fourth, regression-based structural testing and mediation analysis were

conducted to evaluate the hypotheses. This staged procedure ensured that the measurement model was validated before hypothesis testing. Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the sample, including gender, age, education, and monthly income distribution.

**Table 1. Sample Profile**

Category	Group	n (%)
Gender	Male	126 (41.2)
Gender	Female	180 (58.8)
Age	Under 20	6 (2.0)
Age	20s	151 (49.5)
Age	30s	114 (37.3)
Age	40s	29 (9.3)
Age	50 and above	6 (2.0)
Education	Middle school	12 (3.9)
Education	High school	65 (21.1)
Education	Bachelor's	160 (52.2)
Education	Master's	54 (17.6)
Education	Doctoral	5 (1.5)
Monthly income	Below 3,000 RMB	72 (23.5)
Monthly income	3,000–5,000 RMB	135 (44.2)
Monthly income	5,000–7,000 RMB	46 (15.2)
Monthly income	Above 7,000 RMB	53 (17.3)

Note: Percentages are based on the 306 valid responses retained for analysis.

#### 4. Results

The empirical analysis began with an examination of the relationships among the key variables. Table 2 presents the correlation matrix. The results show that demographic control variables exhibit weak associations with the core constructs, whereas e-CRM is positively correlated with trust, satisfaction, commitment, e-WOM, and repurchase intention. These

patterns provide initial support for the proposed framework prior to formal hypothesis testing.

Subsequently, reliability and validity were assessed. The results are summarized in Table 3. All constructs exceeded the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70 in Cronbach's alpha, indicating satisfactory internal consistency. The overall Cronbach's alpha for the instrument was 0.946. At the construct level, reliability coefficients were 0.917 for e-CRM, 0.917 for trust, 0.867 for satisfaction, 0.898 for commitment, 0.838 for e-WOM, and 0.847 for repurchase intention.

These patterns provide initial support for the proposed framework before more formal hypothesis testing.

Sampling adequacy and factorability were also confirmed. The KMO value was 0.938, substantially above the recommended 0.70 threshold, and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ( $\chi^2 = 6162.402$ ,  $df = 595$ ,  $p < .001$ ), indicating that the data were suitable for factor analysis. Exploratory factor analysis extracted six factors with eigenvalues greater than 1, and the cumulative variance explained reached 64.077%, supporting the proposed dimensional structure.

Confirmatory factor analysis further demonstrated that the six-factor measurement model provided an adequate representation of the observed data. The fit indices were acceptable to strong:  $\chi^2/df = 1.440$ , GFI = 0.868, AGFI = 0.847, NFI = 0.878, TLI = 0.955, CFI = 0.959, and RMSEA = 0.038. These values support convergent and discriminant validity and justify proceeding to hypothesis testing. The measurement model fit indices are reported in Table 4.

**Table 2. Correlation Matrix**

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Gender	1								
2. Age	.057	1							
3. Education	.033	.022	1						
4. e-CRM	.015	.067	.076	1					
5. Trust	.027	.047	.122*	.425**	1				
6. Satisfaction	.023	.034	.016	.495**	.291**	1			
7. Commitment	.036	.073	.001	.490**	.335**	.434**	1		
8. e-WOM	.014	.081	.000	.572**	.362**	.481**	.438**	1	
9. Repurchase Intention	.012	.033	.027	.531**	.386**	.499**	.446**	.507**	1

Note: \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ .

**Table 3. Reliability and Validity Summary**

Construct / Test	Items	Statistic	Result
e-CRM	13	Cronbach's $\alpha$	.917
Trust	5	Cronbach's $\alpha$	.917

Satisfaction	4	Cronbach's $\alpha$	.867
Commitment	5	Cronbach's $\alpha$	.898
e-WOM	5	Cronbach's $\alpha$	.838
Repurchase intention	3	Cronbach's $\alpha$	.847
Overall instrument	35	Cronbach's $\alpha$	.946
Sampling adequacy	—	KMO	.938
Sphericity	—	Bartlett's $\chi^2$	6162.402 ( $p < .001$ )
<b>Exploratory factor analysis</b>	—	<b>Cumulative variance explained</b>	<b>64.077%</b>

**Table 4. Measurement Model Fit Indices**

Fit Index	Criterion	Value	Assessment
$\chi^2/df$	1–3	1.440	Good
GFI	> .80	.868	Good
AGFI	> .80	.847	Good
NFI	> .80	.878	Acceptable
TLI	> .90	.955	Good
CFI	> .90	.959	Good
RMSEA	< .08	.038	Good

Table 5 reports the direct effects of e-CRM on trust, satisfaction, and commitment. The findings strongly support H1–H3. Specifically, e-CRM positively predicts trust ( $\beta = .425$ ,  $p < .01$ ), satisfaction ( $\beta = .495$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and commitment ( $\beta = .490$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The explanatory power is meaningful: e-CRM accounts for 18.1% of the

variance in trust, 24.5% in satisfaction, and 24.0% in commitment. The strongest standardized effect is on satisfaction, suggesting that consumers respond especially positively to the experiential and service-related aspects of e-CRM.

**Table 5. Direct Effects of E-Crm on Relationship Quality**

Dependent Variable	Predictor	$\beta$	R <sup>2</sup>	F
Trust	e-CRM	.425**	.181	66.899**
Satisfaction	e-CRM	.495**	.245	98.320**
Commitment	e-CRM	.490**	.240	95.921**

Note: \*\*  $p < .01$ .

Mediation was examined through regression-based hierarchical models. The logic is straightforward: if e-CRM significantly predicts the outcomes, significantly predicts the mediators, and the mediators remain significant when entered together with e-CRM while the e-CRM coefficient decreases, mediation is supported. The results indicate that relationship quality partially mediates the effects of e-CRM on both e-WOM and repurchase intention. The detailed mediation results are reported in Table 6. For e-WOM, e-CRM alone significantly predicts the outcome ( $\beta = .510$ ,  $p < .01$ ). When trust,

satisfaction, and commitment are introduced separately, each mediator remains significant and the standardized coefficient for e-CRM declines. A similar pattern appears for repurchase intention. In all models, the e-CRM coefficient remains significant but is reduced when the mediator is included, indicating partial rather than full mediation. These findings support H4 and H5 and confirm that relationship quality serves as the central transmission mechanism linking platform capabilities to post-purchase behavior.

**Table 6. Mediation Models**

Model	Dependent Variable	Predictors	$\beta$ (e-CRM)	$\beta$ (Mediator)	R <sup>2</sup>	F
Panel A. e-WOM	Panel A. e-WOM	Panel A. e-WOM	Panel A. e-WOM	Panel A. e-WOM	Panel A. e-WOM	Panel A. e-WOM
4	e-WOM	e-CRM	.510**	—	.345	79.401**
5	e-WOM	e-CRM + Trust	.443**	.145**	.379	93.152**
6	e-WOM	e-CRM + Satisfaction	.470**	.262**	.360	84.941**
Panel B.	Panel B.	Panel B.	Panel B.	Panel B.	Panel B.	Panel B.

Repurchase Intention	Repurchase Intention	Repurchase Intention	Repurchase Intention	Repurchase Intention	Repurchase Intention	Repurchase Intention
7	Repurchase Intention	e-CRM + Trust	.447**	.196**	.313	68.919**
8	Repurchase Intention	e-CRM + Satisfaction	.376**	.313**	.356	83.450**
9	Repurchase Intention	e-CRM + Commitment	.411**	.244**	.327	73.419**

Note: \*\*  $p < .01$ . The decline in the e-CRM coefficient after the mediator is introduced indicates partial mediation.

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

This study set out to explain how e-CRM contributes to post-purchase behavior in online shopping platforms and whether relationship quality mediates that relationship. The results provide consistent support for the proposed framework. First, e-CRM exerts significant positive effects on trust, satisfaction, and commitment. This confirms that digital customer relationship management should not be understood only as an operational or technical support system. It also functions as a relational mechanism that shapes how customers evaluate the platform.

Second, relationship quality is shown to be highly relevant to both repurchase intention and e-WOM. This finding is important because it demonstrates that online shopping outcomes are not driven only by price or convenience. Customers' willingness to remain with a platform and recommend it to others depends on how secure, satisfied, and committed they feel in relation to the platform. These relational outcomes become particularly critical in digital markets where alternatives are abundant and switching barriers are low.

Third, the mediation results clarify the mechanism through which e-CRM influences customer behavior. The evidence of partial mediation suggests that e-CRM matters in two ways. On the one hand, it directly affects post-purchase intentions by improving convenience, responsiveness, and perceived platform quality. On the other hand, it indirectly influences those outcomes by strengthening trust, satisfaction, and commitment. This dual pathway strengthens the explanatory value of the model and aligns with relationship marketing theory.

The study also offers several theoretical contributions. It advances the e-CRM literature by treating e-CRM as a multidimensional construct rather than a single undifferentiated technology bundle. This distinction is useful

because it recognizes that communication, service, interaction, and security are analytically separable but jointly important. The study also extends relationship quality research by demonstrating that trust, satisfaction, and commitment jointly transmit the effects of e-CRM to both behavioral loyalty and customer advocacy. Finally, by examining repurchase intention and e-WOM together, the study provides a more integrated view of post-purchase behavior in digital commerce.

From a managerial perspective, the findings suggest that online shopping platforms should invest in integrated e-CRM systems rather than treating each digital function in isolation. Personalized and non-intrusive communication can enhance customer orientation, efficient transaction systems can reduce frustration, and responsive service can improve satisfaction after purchase. Platforms should also recognize the strategic value of community functions that foster interaction and a sense of belonging. Most importantly, visible security and privacy protections remain essential because they support trust at the foundation of online exchange.

The findings also have implications for the sustainability of platform business models. Strong relationship quality encourages repeat purchase behavior and customer advocacy, both of which reduce reliance on costly short-term acquisition strategies. In that sense, relational stability contributes to the economic sustainability of digital platforms by improving retention and generating organic growth through positive e-WOM.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the mediation analysis is regression-based. Future studies could strengthen the indirect effect test by using bootstrapping procedures within SEM. Second, the cross-sectional design limits causal inference. Longitudinal studies would be valuable for examining how relationship quality develops over time. Third,

the study is conducted in a specific online shopping context, so future research could compare different countries or platform types. Fourth, although e-CRM is modeled as multidimensional, the present study does not compare the relative explanatory weight of each e-CRM dimension on different relational outcomes. Future work may address this issue using more fine-grained path models.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that multidimensional e-CRM significantly enhances trust, satisfaction, and commitment, and that these dimensions of relationship quality partially mediate the effects of e-CRM on repurchase intention and e-WOM. The results highlight that successful digital customer management depends not only on technological functionality but also on the ability to build and sustain strong customer relationships.

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