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경영학 석사 학위논문

**Dual Mediation Effect of
Altruism & Self-enhancement on
Satisfied Service to Consumer's WOM
Intention**

**- Moderating Effect of
Geographic Proximity to a Service from
WOM giver and WOM receiver**

소비자의 서비스 만족도에 따른 구전 의향에서의
이타적 동기와 자기 향상 동기의 이중 매개 효과
- 화자와 청자의 서비스 이용 지리적 거리의
조절 효과 중심으로

2022년 2월

서울대학교 대학원

경영학과 마케팅전공

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Service to Consumer's WOM Intention
- Moderating Effect of
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WOM giver and WOM receiver**

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Abstract

This study examines the dual mediating effect of altruism and self-enhancement on consumers' intentions to generate WOM (word of mouth) of a satisfied service, especially geographical proximity of WOM audience and consumer moderates the effect of satisfied service on altruistic motivation and self-enhancement motivation for affecting on WOM intention.

I posit a hypothesis that if a consumer is satisfied with a certain service, it induces consumer's altruism or self-enhancement to increase consumer's willingness of generating WOM. In addition, this mediating effect will be moderated by geographical proximity to a service from a consumer and from a WOM audience.

This study conducted two experiments to prove the hypotheses. Experiment 1 confirmed a direct effect from satisfied service to high intention of generating WOM and found the significant dual mediation effect of satisfied service that increases consumer's intention of generating WOM to others via altruistic motivation and self-enhancement motivation. Experiment 2 found a significant indirect effect of WOM receiver's high proximity and consumer's low proximity, under the satisfied service condition, on consumer's altruistic motivation such that the combination increases consumer's altruism, thereby increasing WOM intention. However, no significant indirect effect of proximity combination via self-enhancement motivation was found to generate WOM.

While prior literature on consumer's WOM intentions have merely focused on product-oriented issues, this research investigates service-oriented perspectives so that the study has the academic contribution of WOM research in the service arena.

Also, this research explores new insight on WOM valence by introducing geographical proximity as a moderator, which has been studied as a small part of large body of research.

Keyword : Word of mouth, Service, Satisfaction, Altruism, Helping others, Self-enhancement, Geographic Proximity, Distance

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1. Introduction

How will the geographical proximity affect consumer's motivations to enhance their willingness to transfer WOM (Word of mouth)? Suppose that you once traveled to a small town that is far away from where you live, and you sometimes think of the places such as a delicious Pizza place or a small coffee store in the town. One day, you hear that your friend will visit the town to travel, what would come to your mind after you heard the name of town? and what are you going to tell him? Would your motivation of giving information be different if your friend is not visiting there but moving there for a living? Also, would this situation feel different than a situation where you talk about a good restaurant nearby your house to your neighborhood? How does this geographical distance affect our willingness to generate word of mouth?

This research started with a curiosity of what kind of psychological mechanism is involved in the described phenomenon.

The term WOM usually refers to “the flow of communications among consumers about a product or a service” (Westbrook 1987). And the research on WOM in the consumer behavior field has thrived because WOM has been recognized as an important attribute to form a positive relationship between a provider and its consumers (Sheth & Parvatiyar 1995). For instance, a study revealed that WOM communications influence nearly 70 percent of buying decisions (Bettencourt 1997) and it tends to be highly persuasive and, in turn, to be extremely effective

(Bristor 1990). Thus, it has been mainstream finding what drives the WOM effect in the marketing research field.

The fundamental baseline for WOM sharing would be the consumer's favorable experience of using a product or a service. Many researchers found that the satisfaction level of experienced products or services induces consumer's commitment, which increases WOM sharing behaviors (Brown et al., 2005, Chu et al. 2012, Matos et al. 2008). However, there is remaining space whether consumer's commitment would be the only mediator to increase WOM intentions of highly satisfied products or services.

From the research on consumer's motivation to increase WOM, a psychological and social motivation has been confirmed, and this study examines the relationship between satisfied service and WOM intention through these motivations.

Firstly, in prior literature, researchers made a consensus that WOM has originated from altruism of consumers. Dichter (1966) identifies a group of "people of good will" who have intentions to share WOM to other people in the marketplace. An altruistic consumer, who is satisfied with a certain product or service, wants to share the information to others voluntarily to others (Blodgett, et al. 1993; Heckman & Guskey 1998; Mittal, et al. 1999; Swan & Oliver 1989). And this point of view has been regarded as the mainstream idea of defining consumer's motivation to generate WOM.

Secondly, WOM has not only the provider side's benefits, but it is also beneficial to a consumer who delivers WOM. As WOM is a social behavior (Wirtz and Chew, 2002) involving "person-to-person communication where the audience perceives the speaker to be non-commercial about a service, product, or brand" (Arndt, 1967), A WOM giver may be motivated by individual characteristics,

social capability, and want to help others (Lau and Ng, 2001). Thus, people sometimes generate positive WOM because they want to be socially accepted by other people (Baumeister & Leary, 2017). According to this social-acceptance motivation, it involves managing his or her representation of the self in social communications to make good impressions and gain a positive image from other people (Berger & Schwatz 2011). And this “self-enhancement” motivation is also widely accepted as a social driver to generate WOM.

In sum, a lot of studies found these motivations as mediators affecting consumer’s WOM intention, however, few research examined plausible moderators that would affect the route to these psychological and social mediators for increasing consumer’s WOM sharing. This study set the spatial closeness from two perspectives as moderators: distances from a WOM giver and from a receiver towards a service place. In past research on WOM valence, psychological proximity between WOM giver and receiver (social tie or strength) or proximity between WOM giver and a service (e.g., Zhang et al. 2021) was main issue of the studies. However, this study differentiates from prior studies by examining geographical proximity from service location to experienced user (WOM giver) and potential user of the service (WOM receiver) and explores whether geographical proximity will function as a moderator, which may change the route from experienced products or services to either altruistic or self-enhancement motivation.

Lastly, for the independent variables, a majority of WOM studies have merely focused on product-oriented issues (Murray 1991) while remarkably little attention has been paid to consumer behavior towards experienced services. However, some researchers warned that WOM is more important and influential within a service

concept than product scenarios (Murray and Schlacter 1990; Zeithaml 1985) due to its own characteristic of intangibility and higher uncertainty (Murray and Schlacter 1990). In addition to it, consumers react more to WOM about experiential than material purchase both in online and offline (Bastose & Moore, 2019). Thus, this study sheds light on the WOM studies by using WOM of a service, not a product as the main research variable.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

High satisfaction level of experienced service increases consumer's willingness of generating WOM

Westbrook (1987) suggested that consumption experiences create subjective feelings towards the experiences which in turn become an individual's motivation. The resulting motivation determines the possibility of post-consumption behaviors such as WOM communication, complaints, and repurchase of the product or the service. Thus, it is reasonable to speculate that experiences of consumption and motivations are closely related in the process of WOM transmissions. Recognizing the possibility that consumers' underlying motivations to deliver WOM may differ depending on their consumption experiences, satisfaction and dissatisfaction would be the crucial matter for determining consumer's next behavior. In this study, we are focusing on consumer's satisfaction level as an independent variable for intention of delivering WOM.

Satisfaction is "a personal attitude including positive or negative feelings about an object" and it is usually viewed as a post-consumption evaluation with both

cognitive and affective elements (Oliver 1997). To narrow down, in marketing, consumer's satisfaction is recognized as an important key point of a general attitude toward an organization (e.g., company as a product or a service supplier) and a significant determinant of future consumer behavior such as repurchase and intention to reuse the service (Zeithaml 2000). As WOM is a social behavior (Wirtz & Chew, 2002) that is information transmission from person to person involved in the process, service marketing and management research has shown the robust relationship between customer assessments of satisfaction and WOM intentions (Ferguson et al., 2006; White & Schneider, 2000). There is a clear relationship between consumer satisfaction and positive WOM generation and transmission (Buttle 1998). Furthermore, past research has examined not only the effect of satisfaction generating positive WOM but also the effect of dissatisfaction generating negative WOM (Jeffry et al. 1993). Especially, in the service area, it is found that a positive and significant relationship between consumer's evaluation of service quality and the intentions to recommend the service provider (Parasuraman et al. 1998, 1991).

Although the previous research has well established an important theoretical link between consumer satisfaction and positive WOM generation, there are at least two rationales for this study to resolve the theoretical puzzle remaining in the WOM study.

First, while the positive correlation between customer's high satisfaction and positive WOM generation has been confirmed by several empirical studies (Heckman & Guskey 1998; Mittal et al. 1999), some studies assert that these two constructs do not show precise correlation (Arnett, German & Hunt 2003, Bettencourt 1997; Reynolds & Beatty 1999). This implies that consumer

behavioral research on WOM should focus more deeply on the mechanism behind the route from a satisfied experience to generating positive WOM. In this study, I posit two psychological motivations of consumers to generate WOM and examine when the motivations can be activated in detail.

Second, while the consumer's high satisfaction rate and WOM intention are regarded as having a high correlation, the service-oriented empirical research is covered fewer than the product-oriented studies. Considering the importance of subjective feelings of consumers towards a service, it needs to be implemented by more empirical studies. Vargo & Lusch (2004) insisted that the concept of service domain regards "service" as the fundamental basis of exchange from people to people. Thus, unlike sales of products, primarily a one-way offering from a supplier, service provision can be characterized by co-creation and mutual experience with a supplier and consumers (Edvardsson et al. 2005b). Ferguson et al. (2006) asserts that consumer-side value during the service experience should be deeply assessed by consumer's subjective feelings such as satisfaction and loyalty. Thus, it is plausible whether consumers are satisfied or not with experienced service would affect their upcoming behavior on WOM.

In this study, I try to explore whether consumers have intentions to generate WOM to others if they are highly satisfied with a service than controlled situation (not satisfied or dissatisfied).

Altruism as a mediator of satisfied service to willingness to generate WOM

People's empathy of willingness to help others is regarded as a basic antecedent of future WOM generation. Dichter (1966) identifies a group of "people of good will"

who have intentions to share WOM to other people in the marketplace. People in this group are willing to share information because they feel the need to give something to others from the good nature of human beings. Many researchers insist that the basic human need for helping others is a motivation for spreading useful information (Atkin 1972; Levy 1978; Richmond 1977). Richins & Root-Shaffer (1988) also indicated that there is direct evidence between market involvement and WOM activity by consumer's voluntary good will act.

And sometimes this altruism acts as a motivation to prevent potential damage or loss of others, Engel et al. (1993) suggested that altruistic motivation is proceed when consumers want to help other consumers and to help them make good purchasing decisions: if the previous purchase experience was negative, the consumers transfer negative WOM to other consumers for saving them from mis-purchases. Sandaram et al. (1998) developed eight motivational classifications for WOM; four motivations for positive WOM and four motivations for negative WOM, among all motivations, altruism was the only motivation that is included in both positive and negative WOM motivation. Thus, it is plausible to set a hypothesis that helping other consumers from genuine altruism is a motivation for willingness to generate WOM of experienced service which was satisfactory.

Self-enhancement as a mediator of satisfied service to willingness of generating WOM

Another reason why consumers generate WOM is to resonate themselves with and make impressions on others. As Goffman (1959) said "social interactions can be seen as a performance", prior research on WOM valence examined consumer's

social communication and found that consumers often share WOM to expressing and make themselves different from others (Berger & Schwartz, 2011). In other words, when people talk to others, people may use information that has positive implications for themselves (Sirgy, 1982). People try to maintain positive self-regard by connecting the self with positive personal outcomes (Brown et al., 1988) and distinguishing the self from negative outcomes (Sedikides, 1993). So, this need of “self-enhancement” (Fiske, 2001) makes consumers seem to be more inclined to share positive information for making a good impression on themselves. Some research asserted that status seeking is the main reason for many online reviews (Lampel & Bhalla, 2007). Furthermore, consumers use impression management by talking about a product to convey an image of themselves being with the product (Chung & Darke, 2006).

Building on this notion, I posit that self-enhancement motivation will increase WOM generating intention as well as previously mentioned altruistic motivation from experienced service. And the remained question is whether the satisfied level of experienced service affects the route to these two motivations. While many studies previously mentioned empirically tested the relationship between either consumer’s altruistic motivation or consumer’s motivation of self-enhancement and generating WOM, few studies examined whether the degree of satisfaction with a product or service simultaneously affects these psychological motivations to increase WOM behavior. Thus, I posit a hypothesis of dual mediation model, that is, the effect of satisfaction level of experienced service to WOM valence is dual-mediated by two motivations.

Proximity of WOM Receiver and Giver to a Service Location Moderates the Effect of Satisfied Service on Altruism

There are many studies related to spatial proximity. Geographical closeness between individuals significantly generates positive effects such as social support, social interactions, and trust (Meyners et al., 2017; Molina- Morales & Martínez-Fernández, 2010). In addition, in many of past literatures, the likelihood of social influence has been known to be higher with geographic proximity (Festinger et al., 1963; Hägerstrand, 1967). Thus, it is obvious that application of geographic remarks would stimulate consumer's WOM behavior and enhance social influence among consumers.

In past literatures, many researchers have long studied that human beings share rumors, folktales, and buzz not only for entertaining purpose, but because the words seem to contain true, useful and relevant information for life (Brunvand, 1981, p. 11; Allport & Postman, 1947; Rosnow, 1980; Shibutani, 1966). This means that useful stories and information (Berger & Milkman, 2012; Heath et al., 2001) are more likely to be delivered and shared to other people. For instance, restaurant reviews are frequently voted for the New York Times' Most Emailed List. And people try to share these kinds of information during their social communication by a special altruistic motivation so that they can make a positive influence on others.

Relevancy and usefulness are dependent on its real usage and commitment of using the information. As proximity can be seen as a visible translation of commitment between partners, commitment is anchored in identification and attachment (Garbarino & Johnson, 1999), two concepts regularly associated with

proximity. Thus, people who want to use and commit through the information are probably the people who are in near distance. For instance, if I share a good hair shop or gym training center that is far from my friend's location, the information is not relevant and useful to my friend as the friend would have less chance of using(committing) the services. But, if the service shops are near to my friend, the information becomes more useful and relevant.

Building on the notion that altruistic motivation of sharing is driven by relevancy and usefulness of the information, low proximity of the WOM receiver to the information location does not induce the giver's altruistic motivation. In contrast, if the information is useful to the WOM receiver, the altruism increases.

Thus, I posit a hypothesis that closeness of WOM receiver to a service site would moderate the positive effect of satisfied service on WOM giver's altruistic motivation, which leads to higher WOM intention.

Furthermore, if we consider the nature of altruism that contrasts with selfish or competitive mindset, the location where a service consumer stand would matter on the altruistic behavior. If the consumer keeps long distance from the service, the frequency of using and relevancy decreases according to propinquity theory (Lipman, 1968; Reagans, 2011). In such a situation, a decreased relevancy to the consumer combined with high relevancy of the information to the receiver, the consumer will feel granted to share the information without hesitance. This means WOM giver's proximity to a service location can affect altruism towards the WOM receiver as well.

Building on this notion, it is plausible that WOM receiver's high proximity and WOM giver's low proximity to a service site increases a giver's altruistic motivation for generating WOM of the satisfied service.

Proximity of WOM Giver & Receiver to a Service Location Moderates the Effect of Satisfied Service on Self-enhancement

When referred to as proximity, there are two types of its meaning: spatial closeness or propinquity. The former refers to geographical closeness that is limited by physical characteristics such as distance and time for travel. The latter implies much of psychological nearness including kinship or even similarities in nature between things. And these two types of proximity are correlated such as high geographical proximity induces psychological closeness. “Propinquity theory” states that the frequency of interaction and communication between individuals depend on spatial or geographic proximity. Thus, there are many studies exploring the positive effect of high proximity on consumer’s behaviors in the marketing field. However, at the best level of my knowledge, the opposite perspective that low proximity is beneficial for generating WOM has not been studied.

An important aspect of a person’s self-enhancement involves managing his or her representation of the self in social communications to create good impressions from others (Berger & Swartz, 2011). So, people may show off their performance and experiences. According to the uniqueness theory, people try to enhance their social self by scarce commodities than easily accessible products or services, and exert more efforts to experience and show off the products or services that are not easily accessed (Lynn, 1992; Snyder, 1992). This scarcity and low accessibility may come from physical distance. In addition, Amar & Andrew (2010) insists that this self-enhancement and uniqueness-pursuing motivations for showing an individual's social remarks have an impact on consumer’s WOM behavior. Thus,

the low chance of accessibility from other people (i.e., low proximity of WOM audience) can affect consumer's WOM intention.

For example, suppose that a person who lives in LA went to two coffee shops on the weekends and talked about her weekend story to a neighbor: one coffee shop is located in her town and the other coffee shop is in Seattle. Among those two places, which place would she share the story for her self-enhancement? If the audience is not a neighbor but lives in Seattle, how would this story differ? Except for all other factors including the level of how much cost it would take to travel and the symbolism the city Seattle has, it is plausible that the low accessibility to the place itself has a meaningful impact on her intention of sharing the story for self-enhancement.

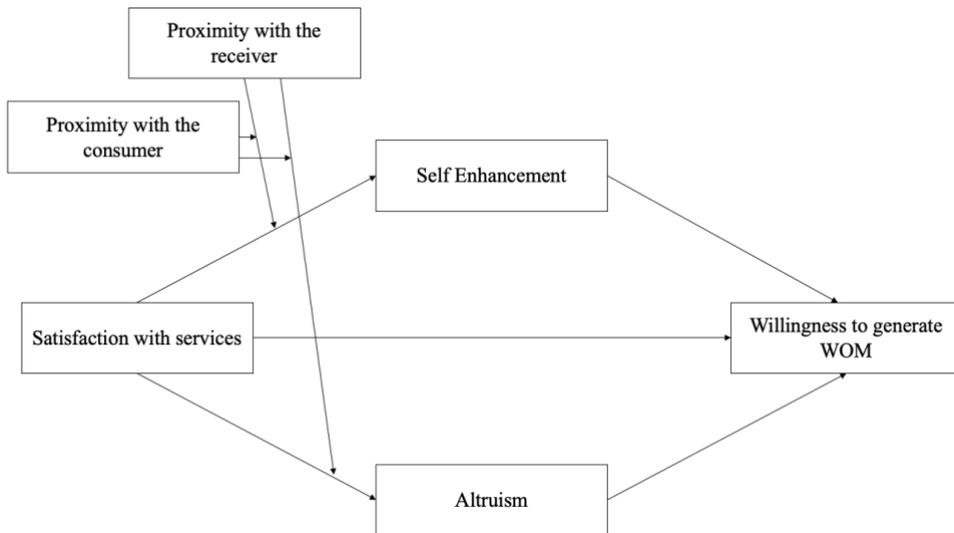
Lynn's uniqueness theory also involves the insight that not only for one's accessibility, but also other consumers' low accessibility has a positive impact on a person who pursues self-enhancement as well.

Therefore, building on this notion, I posit a hypothesis that fairness of WOM receiver's to a service site will increase the giver's willingness of generating WOM through self-enhancement.

The figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of the variables and hypotheses in this study.

3. HYPOTHESIS & FRAMEWORK

<Figure 1: Conceptual Framework >



***H1:** Satisfaction with an experienced service affects consumer’s willingness to generate WOM such that high satisfaction increases WOM intention.*

***H2:** The effects of satisfaction with a service on willingness to generate a positive WOM is mediated by both self enhancement and altruism.*

***H3:** The effects of satisfaction with a service on willingness to generate a positive WOM mediated by self enhancement is conditioned on proximity of the service site to the WOM receiver and to the consumer.*

H3-a: The moderation effect of WOM receiver's proximity to consumer's self-enhancement affected by satisfied service will be moderated by WOM consumer's proximity such that consumer has low proximity to service (vs. high proximity), the moderation effect of WOM receiver's low proximity to self-enhancement will increase.

H4: The effects of satisfaction with a service on willingness to generate a positive WOM mediated by altruism is conditioned on proximity of the service site to the WOM receiver and to the consumer.

H4-a: The moderation effect of WOM receiver's proximity to consumer's altruism affected by satisfied service will be moderated by WOM giver's proximity such that WOM giver has low proximity to service (vs. high proximity), the moderation effect of WOM receiver's high proximity to altruism will increase.

4. EXPERIMENTS

OVERVIEW OF THE EXPERIMENTS

I present two experiments that test the hypotheses. Study 1 presents that satisfied restaurant service to WOM intention is positively dual mediated by Altruism and self-enhancement motivation. Study 2 examines that proximity of a service from WOM giver and WOM receiver moderates the route from satisfied service to two mediations (Altruism and self-enhancement).

STUDY 1: Dual Mediation Effect of Altruism & Self-enhancement on Satisfaction Level of a Service to Willingness of Generating WOM

The goal of study 1 is to examine the main hypothesis that satisfied service would have higher efficacy on increasing intention of generating WOM compared to average satisfied service. Also, the study 1 examines the dual mediation effect that satisfaction level of the service affects consumer's willingness of generating WOM through altruistic motivation and self-enhancement.

Method

264 people are recruited to participate in an online survey in exchange for a small monetary compensation through Amazon Mechanical Turk. The mean age was 33 years (19 to 50 years old), and 46% (122 female: 142 male) of our participants were female. The study is designed between subjects with 2 satisfaction level of experience-service conditions (satisfied vs. control).

To prevent bias from satisfaction level of experienced service, perception to satisfaction of service was manipulated by reading each hypothetical scenario below. All participants will read either highly satisfied service or average satisfied service (not bad quality). Real world experience was limited due to unexpected bias from subjective elements (e.g. favorite food style and acquaintance with chef etc.) that may affect the next manipulation of the geographical proximity. During the survey, attention check questions were asked to participants.

The high satisfaction scenario stated,

Imagine that you visited a restaurant two days ago. Assume that the food was very delicious, and you enjoyed the meal. You do not know how popular this restaurant is, but you were extremely satisfied with the food and the service there. You thought that the restaurant is a gem, you want to revisit the restaurant if possible.

The average level of satisfaction scenario stated,

Imagine that you visited a restaurant two days ago. Assume that the food was okay and you think the meal quality is average. You do not know how popular this restaurant is, but you think the food in the restaurant was not bad or not good either. And you are not sure whether you will revisit the restaurant in the future.

For the manipulation check, a separate sample ($n=49$) of participants drawn from Mechanical Turk, the online participant pool operated by Amazon.com, was exposed to the same hypothetical scenario on satisfied service vs. control condition used in the main study. Participants who read satisfaction scenarios provided higher ratings on the perceived satisfaction ($M_{\text{sat}} = 6.10$, $SD=0.84$), compared to those in the control condition ($M_{\text{con}} = 5.22$; $SD=1.18$; $F(1, 96) = 17.66$, $p = .0001$).

Also, participants answered on expected confounding element ‘popularity’ and the result showed that manipulation is not confounded. ($M_{\text{pop}} = 5.69$; $SD=1.25$; $F(1, 48) = 3.26$, $p = .014$)

After reading each scenario (satisfied vs. control version), all the participants asked to complete three measures of WOM valence: “How likely are you to recommend the restaurant to others?”, “I will recommend the restaurant to others.”, “I will

recommend the restaurant to others for sharing information.” (1 = Very unlikely to 7 = Very likely).

Next, participants were complete an assessment of altruism motivation and self-enhancement motivation in a randomly designated sequence. For altruism measurement items, after reading the restaurant scenario with a self-view in two items, each measured on a seven-point Likert scale “I think it is important to share what I know.”, “I think it is important to help someone get the information they need”. (1 = Very unlikely to 7 = Very likely). These measurements are quoted and revised (from a product to a service) from an altruism and helping behavior manipulation of Price et al. (1995). The sequence of these items presented will be randomized.

For self-enhancement measurement items, participants complete another assessment of self-enhancement motivation with a self-view in three items, each measured on a seven-point Likert scale “I think sharing the restaurant will create the impression that I am a good person.”, “I think sharing the restaurant will create a positive impression on others.”, “I would feel good about myself after sharing the information.”. These measurements are quoted and revised (from a product to a service) from a self-enhancement manipulation of Price et al. (1995). The sequence of these items presented will be randomized.

After completing the standard demographic questionnaire, the survey ended. Cronbach’s Alpha of the generating WOM is 0.91 combining three questions of asking intention of WOM. Also, Cronbach’s Alpha value of self-enhancement mediator measurements is 0.84 from two questions and altruism is 0.57. The

covariance from three questions, and Cronbach's Alpha details are described in figure 2.

<Table 1: Covariance and Cronbach's Alpha on the measurements>

Items	WOM	Self Enhancement	Altruism
Average interitem covariance	2.3708	1.5303	0.4466
Number of items in the scale	3 items	3 items	2 items
Scale reliability coefficient	0.9159	0.8414	0.5652

Results

First, one way ANOVA was conducted for examining the direct effect from satisfied level of the service to WOM willingness. As a result, the direct effect is significant ($M_{\text{satisfied}} = 5.8$ vs. $M_{\text{control}} = 4.62$; $F(1, 263) = 41.52$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, hypothesis 1 is supported (see Figure 3).

<Figure 2: Direct effect of satisfied service on consumer's WOM intention>



The means, standard deviations and intercorrelations among the variables are reported in table 1. All the values are rounded off the numbers to the nearest hundreds.

<Table 2: Descriptive Statistics>

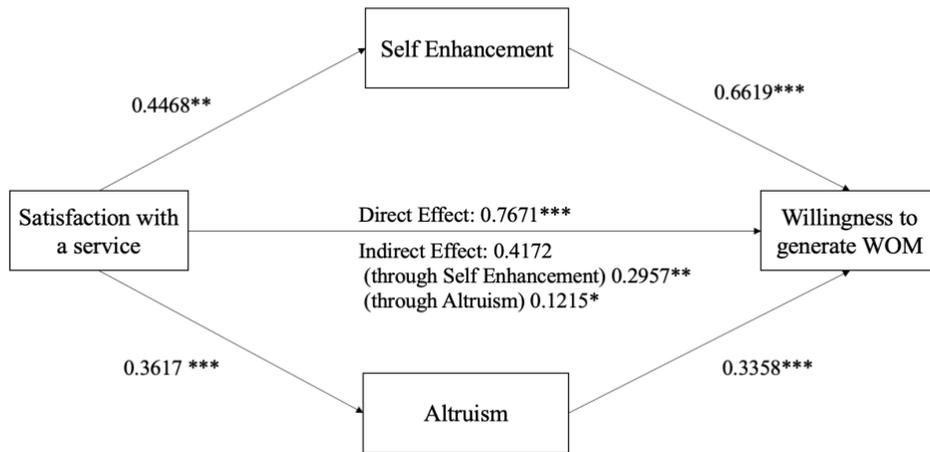
(n = 264)

	mean	s.d.	Min	Max	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
(1) WOM	5.17	1.6	1	7	-					
(2) Satisfacti-on	0.46	0.50	0	1	0.3	-				
(3) Self - Enhancement	5.09	1.35	1	7	0.67	0.17	-			
(4) Altruism	5.72	0.89	1.5	7	0.45	0.20	0.39	-		
(5) Proximity to receiver	0.58	0.49	0	1	0.19	-0.01	0.01	0.18	-	
(6) Proximity to consumer	0.51	0.50	0	1	0.11	0.07	0.10	0.02	-0.02	-

Process model 4 (Hayes, 2012) was used with satisfied service (vs. control) as independent variable, willingness to generate WOM as dependent variable, and self-enhancement and altruism as mediators. The index of dual mediation showed a significant effect of the satisfied service level on WOM willingness.

For dual mediation effect, satisfied service condition is positively related to self-enhancement ($r = 0.45$, $p < 0.01$), and altruism ($r = 0.36$, $p < 0.001$). Altruism is positively related to the intention of generating WOM ($r = 0.66$, $p < 0.001$). Self-enhancement motivation is positively related to intention of generating WOM ($r = 0.34$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, it is confirmed that the indirect effect of satisfied service on WOM intention through altruism ($r = 0.12$, $p < 0.01$) and self enhancement ($r = 0.3$, $p < 0.05$). Total direct effect and the indirect effects are presented in Figure 3.

<Figure 3: Results of main effect and dual mediation effect>



Note: $p < 0.1$ †; $p < 0.05$ *; $p < 0.01$ **; $p < 0.001$ ***

Discussions

Study 1 examined the direct effect of satisfied service (vs. control) on WOM willingness and the dual mediation effect of altruistic motivation and self-enhancement motivation. The direct effect of satisfied service to increase WOM intention is confirmed. Also, the indirect effect of dual mediation of self-enhancement motivation and altruistic motivation was confirmed. The result shows that self-enhancement motivation has a stronger mediating effect than altruistic motivation. The directions of both motivations heading to WOM intention are positive. Between two motivations, the indirect effect value of self-enhancement was higher than the indirect effect value of altruism in satisfied condition.

As both direct effect and indirect effect through two mediations were significant, hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 2 were supported.

STUDY 2: Moderation Effect of WOM Giver and Receiver's Proximity to a Service Site

Study 2 examines the moderating effect of proximity from a consumer side and WOM audience of satisfied service to two mediators: altruism and self-enhancement.

Method

264 people are recruited to participate in an online survey in exchange for a small monetary compensation through Amazon Mechanical Turk. The mean age was 33 (19 to 50 years old), and 46% (122 female: 142 male) of our participants were female. The study is designed between subjects with 2 satisfaction level of experience-service conditions (satisfied vs. control). In each condition, participants were randomly assigned to four different priming conditions of proximity conditions; 2 (high vs. low proximity of WOM giver) x 2 (high vs. low proximity of WOM receiver) to experienced restaurant as service site.

According to the methodology from experiment 1, participants were primed to satisfied service. control condition by reading the same hypothetical scenario regarding the restaurant service. During the survey, attention check questions were asked and participants.

Next, the participants were asked to read hypothetical scenarios of two proximity types; one is from the consumer (self)'s side and the other one is from the receiver (WOM audience)'s side.

The high proximity of a consumer scenario stated,

Remind that the restaurant scenario that you just read. The restaurant is very near to where you live. You can go there in 5-10 minutes by foot. There is no delivery service, so you need to visit there to have a meal.

The low proximity of a consumer scenario stated,

Remind that the restaurant scenario that you just read. The restaurant is very far from where you live. It is in another state; you need to take an airplane or drive 7-8 hours to get there. There is no delivery or pick-up service, so you need to travel to have a meal.

The high proximity of a WOM audience scenario stated,

Remind that the restaurant scenario that you just read. Let's assume that you are going to tell someone about the restaurant. The restaurant is very near to where the person is located. He/she can go there in 5-10 minutes by foot. There is no delivery service, so the person needs to visit there to have a meal.

The low proximity of a WOM audience scenario stated,

Remind that the restaurant scenario that you just read. Let's assume that you are going to tell someone about the restaurant. The restaurant is very far from where the person lives. It is in another state; he/she needs to take an airplane or drive 7-8 hours to get there. There is no delivery or pick-up service, so the person needs to travel to visit there.

For manipulation check of proximity scenario of consumer side and audience side, participants (n=49) who read high proximity scenarios provided higher ratings on the questions asking, "I think the restaurant is very close to where the person lives." ($M_{\text{highp}} = 6.00$, $SD = 0.82$), compared to those in low proximity scenario condition ($M_{\text{lowp}} = 4.51$; $SD = 1.94$; $F(1, 96) = 24.60$, $p = .000$). Also, participants who read low proximity scenarios provided lower ratings on the questions asking, "I think the restaurant is very far from where the person lives in the scenario." ($M = 5.57$, $SD = 1.43$), compared to those in high proximity scenario condition ($M = 4.88$, $SD = 1.81$; $F(1,96)=4.44$, $p=0.038$).

After reading two types of proximity scenario, all the participants asked to complete three measures of WOM valence: "How likely are you to tell about the restaurant to the person in the scenario?", "I will recommend the restaurant to the person in the scenario.", "I will recommend the restaurant to the person in the scenario for sharing information." (1 = Very unlikely to 7 = Very likely).

Finally, the participants are asked to answer the same altruistic motivation questions and self-enhancement questions in random sequence from study 1. After answering several demographic questions, the survey ends.

Results

I used ANOVA to analyze correlation and interactions between the variables; 2 (satisfied vs. control) x 2 (High proximity of a consumer; Low proximity of a consumer) x 2 (High proximity of WOM receiver, Low proximity of WOM receiver) for each self-enhancement and altruistic motivation.

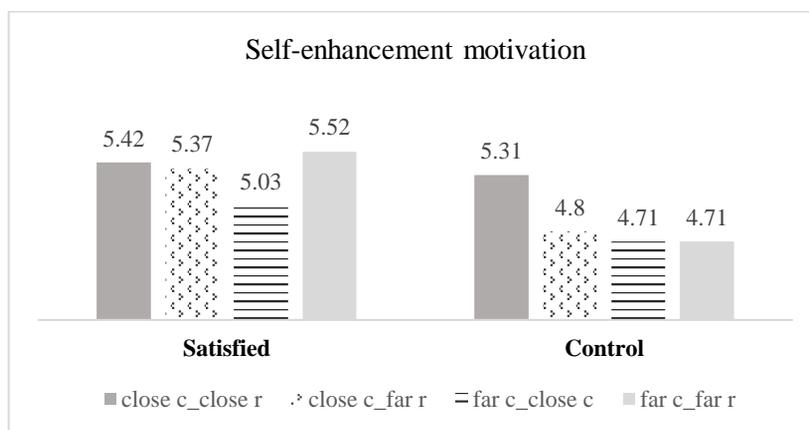
The mean value of self-enhancement motivation on satisfied service condition, low proximity of consumer, and low proximity of receiver group showed the

highest ($M = 5.52$) value, which is consistent with hypothesis 3-a (Figure 4).

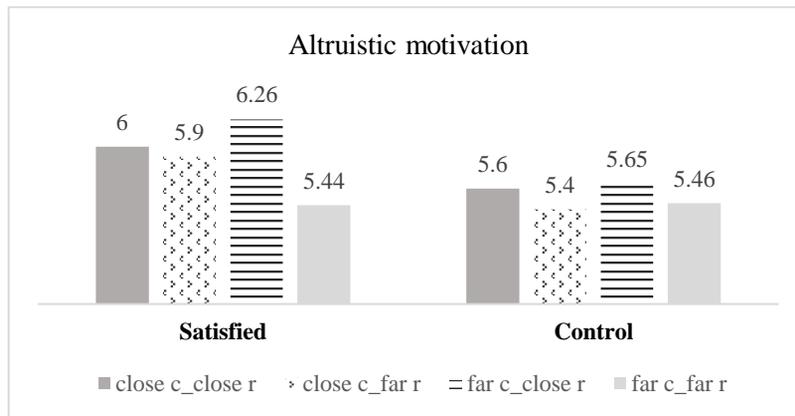
However, one-way ANOVA did not show a significant effect of any combination of proximity types on self-enhancement.

For altruistic motivation in satisfied service condition, low proximity of consumer and high proximity of receiver group showed the highest ($M = 6.26$) mean value, which is consistent with hypothesis 4-a (Figure 5). And one-way ANOVA suggests a significant difference in means between two groups – a combination of low proximity of consumer and low proximity of receiver ($M = 5.44$) vs. a combination of low proximity of consumer and high proximity of receiver ($M = 6.26$) ($F(1, 52) = 14.41, p = 0.00$). Also, two-way ANOVA reveals that proximity of WOM receiver in satisfied service condition has a significant effect on altruism ($F = 9.62, p = 0.0024$) and the interaction effect of proximity of receiver and consumer is significant on altruism as well ($F = 4.77, p = 0.037$). However, the interaction effect of proximity of receiver and consumer does not show significance on self-enhancement motivation.

<Figure 4: Mean value of motivation from proximity groups in self-enhancement>

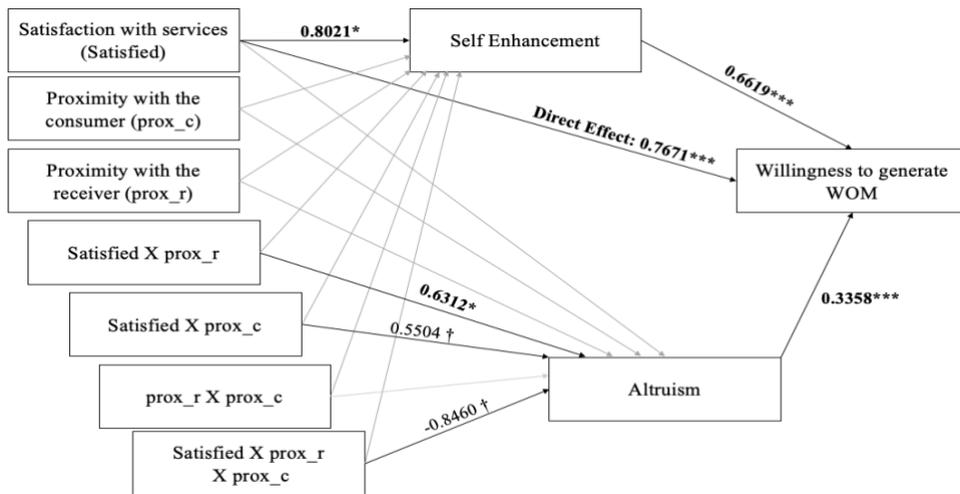


<Figure 5: Mean value of motivation from proximity groups in altruism>



For serially moderated mediation effect, PROCESS Model 11 (Hayes 2017) analysis was conducted. On the regression analysis, the direct effect of satisfied service to WOM intention ($r = 0.77, p < 0.001$) and indirect effect from satisfied service to self-enhancement motivation ($r = 0.8, p < 0.05$) and from self-enhancement to WOM intention ($r = 0.66, p < 0.001$) turned out to be significant. Also, the indirect effect from altruistic motivation to WOM intention ($r = 0.33, p < 0.001$) is significant, however, the indirect effect from satisfied service to altruism was not significant. For different types of proximity interactions, none of significant indirect interaction effects for self-enhancement to WOM willingness was found. However, for altruistic motivation, I found that satisfied service has a significant indirect effect on altruistic motivation under the condition of high proximity of WOM receiver ($r = 0.6, p < 0.05$). Also, proximity of consumer in satisfied service condition ($r = 0.55, p < 0.1$) and three-way interaction of proximity of WOM receiver and consumer in satisfied condition ($r = -0.84, p < 0.1$) showed marginally significant effects. (Figure 4)

<Figure 6: Process model 11 regression model results>



Note: $p < 0.1$ †; $p < 0.05$ *; $p < 0.01$ **; $p < 0.001$ ***

The difference of conditional indirect effects via altruism are significantly different between high proximity of receiver and low proximity of consumer (far r – far c) group (0,0) and high proximity of receiver and low proximity of consumer (close r – far c) group (1,0) (Difference = 0.2120, BootSE = 0.1423) by using standard errors obtained by the bootstrapping method. However, conditional indirect effects via self-enhancement did not show any significant differences between four groups of proximity combinations (Table 3). Table 4 indicates when high proximity of WOM receiver is secured on satisfied service condition, low proximity of consumer has a significant indirect effect on WOM intention via consumer’s altruistic motivation.

<Table 3: Conditional indirect effects>

prox_r	prox_c	Indirect Effect via Self Enhancement				Indirect Effect via Altruism			
		Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
0	0	0.5309	0.2226	0.1924	0.9179	-0.0072	0.0977	-0.1670	0.1555
1	0	0.2106	0.2437	-0.1638	0.6394	0.2047	0.1024	0.0585	0.3930
0	1	0.3771	0.2472	-0.0307	0.7843	0.1776	0.003	0.0546	0.3166
1	1	0.0697	0.1548	-0.1707	0.3391	0.1055	0.0707	0.0055	0.2329

<Table 4: Indices of conditional moderated mediation by proximity to the receiver>

Proximity to the consumer	Indirect Effect via Altruism			
	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
0	0.2120	0.1423	0.0121	0.4733
1	-0.0721	0.0909	-0.2268	0.0716

Discussions

Study 2 examined whether the combination of proximity of WOM receiver side and consumer side conditions the effect of satisfied service on consumer's motivation so that it finally affects consumer's willingness to generate WOM. Even the mean value of each combined proximity group showed a difference in consistency with my hypothesis regarding both altruism and self-enhancement in t-test, however, only the interaction effect of proximity groups on altruism was significant according to two-way ANOVA results.

By analyzing through Process model 11, conditional indirect effects of satisfied service on combination of proximity of WOM receiver and consumer turned out insignificant on willingness to generate WOM via self-enhancement motivation. Therefore, hypothesis 3 and 3-a were not supported.

However, combination of high proximity of WOM receiver and low proximity of consumer under satisfied condition showed a significant indirect effect on generating WOM via altruistic motivation. Therefore, hypothesis 4 and 4-a were supported.

5. GENERAL DISCUSSION

Across the experiments, the study shows that the fundamental psychological motive to help others and to make a good impression activated from a satisfied service can lead consumers to generate positive WOM. Experiment 1 demonstrates the pure efficacy of these dual mediators, altruism and self-enhancement.

Experiments 2 provides support for the hypothesis 4 by showing that altruism is stronger when the WOM audience is close to a service. According to the results, altruistic motivation of the consumer becomes stronger when the receiver is close to the service site and the consumer is far from the service site.

My work can contribute to the literature on WOM in three important ways. First, the contribution lies in extending the literature on proximity to a service with the consumer's intention of generating WOM. Especially, the study offers insights into the underexplored area on what drives consumers to share the information voluntarily or for their own social purposes. By introducing the proximity as a trigger for choosing a route of two motivations, my research contributes to WOM literature by acknowledging that the location of a consumer and other consumer to the service can affect WOM diffusions. Especially, building on the notion that past research merely focused on the positive effect of high proximity on consumers and

service providers (Meyners et al., 2017), this research sheds light to the positive effect of low proximity on WOM generating.

Second, by introducing a new perspective of WOM generation of a service-oriented perspective, rather than a product orientation, the study could divulge the unique conditions and remarks of an experienced service in the regards of consumer's WOM behavior. As personal visiting and experiencing is essential for using a service, which is different from purchasing a product, the spatial proximity to the service is important. Also this geographical proximity has the psychological effect of increasing a self-view. Thus, having in mind the WOM giver's and receiver's spatial proximity would affect consumer's psychological motivations for generating WOM, this study has implications especially in the service marketing arena.

Lastly, obtained findings also contain implications for managers in the service marketing field. The findings suggest that there are many chances of positive WOM generations from consumers who even live far from the service area, but they are willing to generate WOM for consumers who live close to the service area. For example, creating a campaign for the consumers who are no longer available for using a service due to moving can make a positive influence voluntarily on people who do not know the service but live right next to it. Also, the result implies that in the case of being far from the service, rather than living close to the service, it might be advantageous for marketers to expect intriguing self-enhancement motivations from consumers. Thus, practitioners have in mind that low proximity consumers are an important asset for WOM diffusion of a service.

6. LIMITATIONS & FUTURE RESEARCH

The current research was not able to deliver the effect of proximity of WOM giver and receiver to self-enhancement motivation of a consumer. However, there is some evidence that low proximity of consumer and WOM audience have a potential for having an effect on self-enhancement. Thus, implementing efforts to find the mere efficacy of the combination of consumer's and WOM audience's proximity to self-enhancing motivation would be promising for future study. And this research manipulated a hypothetical scenario of experienced service, however, measurement of the past experiences of participants would have a higher level of application on the consumer's real situation.

The current conceptualization of proximity combination on satisfied service of WOM giver and receiver on WOM motivations to increase willingness to generate WOM provides several interesting avenues for future exploration. The most fruitful of these, I believe, is diving deeper into the service-oriented issue while most of the research focuses on the product-oriented issue in WOM valence research. There is a room of uncovered motivations for WOM sharing intention especially in the service arena. Compared to product WOM, service has some unique characteristics such that service is one-time experiences whereas product can be possessed for a long time. By considering such differences, there are possibilities for finding other psychological variables on sharing WOM of experienced service.

Also, the present study examines only two types of moderate variables: proximity of consumers and receivers. In order to explore the contingent effects of spatial proximity, other independent variables such as the cost level of using the service

can also be explored in terms of the moderating impacts of proximity to self-enhancement or altruistic motivation.

In this study, the circumstance of consumer's sharing WOM to the opponent is limited to verbal communication. However, application of proximity variables to the intention of sharing eWOM will have powerful implications in the practical marketing arena. First, practitioners may further examine whether two motivations for sharing information - altruism and self-enhancement - would differ in the online setting as there are possibilities that consumers are more prone to self-enhance under the online setting (Berger & Swartz 2012). Second, the types or characteristics of online site or social media platform would show different patterns of WOM valence such that special review sites such as TripAdvisor or Yelp for sharing good services or places or social networking sites such as Instagram or Twitter for showing individual's daily life to known people would have different purposes and the role of proximity will differ by types of the online platforms.

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Abstract in Korean

소비자의 서비스 만족도에 따른 구전 의향에서의 이타적 동기와 자기 향상 동기의 이중 매개 효과 - 화자와 청자의 서비스 이용 지리적 거리의 조절 효과 중심으로

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위 연구는 소비자의 서비스 만족도에 따른 구전(word-of-mouth) 의향이 소비자의 이타주의적 동기와 자기 향상 동기에 이중 매개되는지를 알아보며, 구전의 화자와 청자의 서비스 위치와의 지리적인 접근성의 조합이 이러한 소비자의 심리적인 동기를 조절하는 지 알아보는 것에 그 목적이 있다.

이러한 목적을 기반으로 본 연구는 온라인으로 미국 및 캐나다 거주 일반인들에게 설문을 통해 실험을 실시하였다. 온라인 설문 조사를 통하여 소비자가 경험한 서비스의 만족도의 높은 수준이 구전 의향에 미치는 긍정적인 효과를 발견하였으며, 만족한 서비스일수록 소비자가 다른 이들에게 이타심의 발현으로 이 서비스를 공유하려는 의도와 다른 이들에게 자신을 돋보이기 위한 자기 향상 동기의 목적으로 구전 의향이 생긴다는 두 가지 심리적 동기의 이중 매개 효과를 검증하였다. 또한, 구전 행위의 화자와 청자가 가지는 서비스 위치로부터의 접근성을 조작하여 구전 행위의 청자가 만족한 서비스 위치와 상대적으로 가깝고 화자가 서비스 위치와 상대적으로 멀 때에 이타주의를 통한 구전 의향이 높아지는 것을 확인하였다. 다만, 자기 향상 동기를 통한 만족한 서비스의 구전 의향 효과에서는 접근성의 조절 효과가 유의하지 않았다.

본 연구는 현재까지 제품 중심에 초점을 맞추었던 구전 효과 연구에 서비스 중심을 기반으로 하여 구전 행위의 화자와 청자의 지리적인 접근성을 새롭게 연구하였다는 것에 학술적인 의의를 지니며, 아울러 기업에서 지금까지 마케팅 측면에서 중요하게 다루어졌던 소비자와 서비스 제공자와의 높은 지리적 접근성의 긍정적인 효과만이 아닌 소비자의 낮은 지리적 접근성의 효과를 소비자의 구전 행위 안에서 재조명할 수 있다는 점에서 실무적 의의를 지닌다.

키워드: 구전 효과, 서비스, 만족도, 이타주의, 자기 향상, 심리적 동기, 지리적 접근성, 소비자 구전 행동

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