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# **Shopping and cross-shopping practices in Hanoi Vietnam: an emerging urban market context**

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## **Abstract**

The process of supermarketization in emerging countries does not imply convergence in shopping practices. Based on a qualitative study in Hanoi, Vietnam, this paper adopts a shopping-as-practice approach with a specific focus on factors influencing practices. Seventy-eight interviews were conducted in six urban districts of Hanoi. The results allowed to identify five types of shopping practices of differing natures and degrees of cross-shopping, and different strategies used to accomplish these practices, dominated by constraints or based on trust. The analysis showed the relationships between the factors and (1) shopping and cross-shopping strategies and (2) the dimensions of shopping practices. These findings deepen the current understanding of shopping and cross shopping practices in the context of emerging markets. This paper also provides recommendations regarding retail policy and development in Vietnam.

Keywords: Vietnam, Food industry, Shopping as practice, Cross-shopping, Fresh vegetable, Qualitative study, Trust

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## **1. Introduction**

Emerging markets are countries and regions experiencing substantial and rapid economic growth and industrialization that are likely to emerge in the future as mature markets (Reinartz et al., 2011). Emergingmarket consumers are becoming a major force in the global economy (O’Cass and Carlson, 2019), and so shopping behavior in emerging countries is increasingly being studied and discussed. Over the last decade, many studies focused on the expansion of supermarkets in developing countries (Humphrey, 2007; Reardon et al., 2012; Gindi et al., 2016) especially in Asia and Vietnam (Figuié and Nguyen, 2006; Maruyama and Trung, 2012; Wertheim-heck et al., 2015). In Vietnam, food safety concerns have become a major issue, particularly in the fruit and vegetables sector (Nhung and Pensupar, 2015), and modern retailing has been seen by the government as the solution to these safety problems (Wertheim-Heck et al., 2014; Wertheim-heck et al., 2015). Until recent years, early adoption of supermarket shopping was not as widespread as expected and seemed to be reserved for the richest,

excluding the poorest consumers (Figuié and Moustier, 2009). Overall economic growth, rapid urbanization, increasing disposable income, increasing purchasing power and transformation in lifestyle, however, have been important factors contributing to the growth of urban retailing in the country (Figuié and Moustier, 2009; Maruyama and Trung, 2007; Wertheim-heck et al., 2015; Wertheim-Heck and Spaargaren, 2016). Since the 2010s, modern retail sales in Vietnam have experimented a steady growth every year, from 30.9 trillion VND (approximately 1300 million \$) in 2011 to 69.2 trillion VND (approximately 2900 million \$) in 2015– a 124% growth rate in 5 years (EARE, 2016). New players have joined the retail market, offering a wide range of choices to consumers, with convenience stores and mini-marts growing from 350 stores in 2014 to over 2,600 stores in 2017 (EBVN, 2018).

In order to understand and predict retail choice, the retail literature has mainly adopted psychoeconomic perspectives which focus on consumer choice and factors influencing it. Such influencing factors of consumers' choice include individual attributes such as socio-demographic characteristics (e.g. Baltas and Papastathopoulou, 2003) or shopping orientation (Cervellon et al., 2015) and store-related attributes such as store image (Visser et al., 2006) or other store attributes (Sinha and Banerjee, 2004). The research on choice between traditional or modern retailers in emerging markets to date has tended to focus on studying traditional markets and modern markets as two separate choices for consumers, with a reference to their socio-demographic attributes (Amine and Lazzaoui, 2011; Chaiyasoonthorn and Suksangiam, 2011; Maruyama et al., 2016). Beyond the well-known fact that consumers prefer to buy fresh produce from traditional wet markets and non-food products from modern retailers, little attention has been given to the situation in which consumers combine or switch between the traditional wet markets and modern retailers while shopping for food. This research will focus on such combination.

Besides, by focusing only on the individual considered as rational, the literature neglects the emotional and social dimensions of shopping and the socio-material context. The shopping-as-practice approach addresses these shortcomings: it is not based on consumer's rationality but on daily routines or practices, and thus provides an understanding of the links between practices and socio-material context. This study adopts this approach and specifically studies shopping and cross-shopping practices in relation to factors linked to both socio-material context and individual factors. The qualitative study design allows us to better understand the diversity of shopping and cross-shopping practices in the context of emerging retail market in Northern Vietnam.

Thanks to the shopping as practice approach with a focus on factors related to practices and the qualitative design, the purpose of this study is to understand the relationships between different factors (physical food environment, personal environment and individual factors) and (1) shopping and crossshopping strategies and (2) the dimensions of shopping practices. From a retail policy perspective, this study helps explain why the process of top-down *supermarketization* in emerging countries is of limited success. It then proposes a framework of shopping practices in emerging urban markets and also provides managerial recommendations regarding retail policy and development.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 presents a review of the literature which looked at retail format choice and cross-shopping behavior and moved to shopping as practice. Section 3 describes the context of the food and retailing environment in Vietnam and presents a review of the literature on retail format choice and shopping practices in Vietnam. Section 4 presents the research methodology, followed by the results (Section 5) and discussion (Section 6). Finally, Section 7 presents the study's contributions, limits and conclusion, with recommendations and suggestions for further research.

## **2. Literature review: From retail choice to shopping practices**

In order to understand shopping and cross-shopping practices in Vietnam, we focus first on retail format choice and its different dimensions as discussed in the literature. The literature on consumer's cross-shopping behavior will then be discussed specifically. Finally, we present the shopping-as-practice approach and its relevance for this study.

### *2.1. Factors influencing retail format choice*

The retail literature mainly adopts psycho-economic perspectives which focus on factors influencing the consumer's choice. In particular, an extensive body of research has studied the various factors influencing retail format choice which include (1) individual factors such as demographic characteristics (Baltas and Papastathopoulou, 2003; Carpenter and Moore, 2006; Carpenter and Brosdahl, 2011; Prasad and Aryasri, 2011) and shopping orientation (Visser and Du Preez, 2001; Cervellon et al., 2015); and (2) store-related factors such as store image (Wakefield and Baker, 1998; Visser et al., 2006) and other store attributes (Sinha and Banerjee, 2004). These factors have been studied in an attempt to predict store format choice and store choice in an overlapping manner (Tripathi and Dave, 2013). However, most of the aforementioned studies have explored the shopping behavior of people who live in a 'food-rich society' (Sobal et al., 2014) such as the US or UK (Pitt et al., 2017).

Several studies have investigated consumers' retail choice behavior in emerging countries (e. g. Amine and Lazzaoui, 2011; Goldman and Hino, 2005; Ortega and Tschirley, 2017), including Asia (e. g. Chaiyasoonthorn and Suksa-ngiam, 2011; Maruyama et al., 2016) and Vietnam (e. g. Figuié and Moustier, 2009).

More precisely, the debate about consumer patronage between modern and traditional food retailers in emerging markets has been discussed in a number of studies with heterogeneous approaches and findings regarding the factors influencing shopping behaviors at traditional markets or modern retailers. Some studies have highlighted the importance of socio-demographic factors. Chaiyasoonthorn and Suksangiam (2011) adopt a quantitative approach to study factors affecting customers using modern retail stores in Bangkok, Thailand. Socio-demographic factors such as personal and household income together with distance from home, distance from workplace, purchase intention, customer satisfaction and perceived service quality are found to be correlated with the purchase of goods and services from modern retail stores. Recent research by Gilboa and Mitchell (2020) compares the impact of national culture and economic capacity (purchasing power parity) on shopper behavior. This research suggests that culture (measured using Hofstede's cultural dimension scores) shapes the nature of shoppers' profiles. However, the authors find that the most important impact on purchase behavior and spending rates in rich countries is culture whereas in poor countries it is the economic situation. In contrast with the aforementioned authors, a study by Maruyama et al. (2016) on the modernization of fresh food retailing in China argues that while freshness, accessibility and the possibility of bargaining are factors that influence consumers' decisions to buy fresh food from traditional vs modern retail formats, the effects of socioeconomic factors such as income and storage facility are very limited. This is in line with previous research by Goldman and Hino (2005) showing that socioeconomic factors have no impact on shopping behavior across formats in an ethnic minority community. The authors, however, highlight that the geographical diffusion barrier (distance of supermarkets) was the main limitation on supermarkets' market share growth.

Some studies go beyond retail choice and focus on shopping experiences or relationships with the seller. Research by Amine and Lazzaoui (2011) exploring Moroccan shoppers' reactions to modern food retailing systems shows how the mass arrival of foreign distribution concepts is affecting local buyers' habits in emerging countries. Using a qualitative approach, combining in-store observations of behaviors and in-depth interviews, the results show that the differences in social classes give rise to various ways of shopping and generate singular symbolic representations of shopping experiences. Their study also reveals the hybridization of shopping practices whereby consumers transpose certain values and shopping

behaviors inherited from the traditional trade into modern stores. Arditto et al. (2019) highlight the importance of the relationship between the salesperson and Peruvian customers in relation to their shopping patterns. According to the authors, consumers' perception of sales staff in terms of expertise, trust, interaction, and risk can profit a company's relationship with customers in the long term. On the other hand, Mukherjee et al. (2020) argue that although enduring relationships between buyers and sellers encourage subsistence market consumers to shop at a particular retailer, these relationships also have a negative side as poor consumers are compelled to stick to their neighborhood retailers due to convenience, social compulsions, and their value-added services.

## *2.2. Cross-shopping behavior*

Cort and Dominguez (1977) defined cross-shopping as the act of a single consumer patronizing multiple types of outlets that carry the same broad merchandise lines. Later, Hansen (2003) identified two types of cross-shopping behavior from a retailer's perspective. The first is 'Intertype' cross-shopping, which is defined as crossing between different types of outlets (e.g. from a supermarket to a hypermarket). The second is 'Intratype' crossing, which refers to crossing between the same types of outlets (e.g. from one supermarket to another).

Within the literature on cross-shopping, some studies focus on the antecedents of this particular shopping behavior. Skallerud et al. (2009) address the antecedents of cross-shopping behavior including product assortment, convenience orientation, price consciousness, impulse buying tendency and perceived time pressure. They focus solely on 'intertype' food store cross-shopping behavior. Abidin et al. (2016) later conducted a study to test these antecedents which influence cross-shopping behavior among consumers in Selangor, Malaysia. Of the five antecedents mentioned, only two – price consciousness and perceived time pressure – were found to be significant in predicting the cross-shopping behavior of Malaysian consumers. However, the study only concerns consumers of modern formats including hypermarkets, super department stores and conventional supermarkets. To address intertype crossshopping behavior, Hino (2014) studies the cross-shopping phenomenon by employing a format-selective use approach. While the economic status of households shows less impact on consumers' cross-shopping, format attributes and way-of-life variables are stronger predictors of this behavior. The findings reflect significant differences between Israeli Arabs and Jews in many aspects using way-of-life variables.

Motivations and shopper typologies are another approach to studying cross-shopping behavior. Two continuous studies on cross-format shopping motives and shopper typologies in India were published by

Jayasankaraprasad et al. in 2012 and by Jayasankaraprasad and Kathyayani in 2014. The authors identify nine cross-format shopping motivations (value for money, value for time, price consciousness, local shopping, shopping enjoyment, social shopping, variety seeking, entertainment motive, and brand consciousness) and five cross-format shopper segments (economic shopper, convenience shopper, pricepromotional shopper, hedonic shopper, and socialization shopper). In markets for Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG), Klein and Schmitz (2016) highlight consumers' specific cross-format shopping combinations and identify three clusters with different main types. However, these types are dominated by supermarkets, discount stores, and hypermarkets, i.e. modern formats.

The literature presented above mainly focuses on the retail format choice and cross-shopping behavior of individuals, paying less attention to the food environment. In a literature review, Pitt et al. (2017) summarized qualitative evidence regarding the influence of local food environments on food behaviors. The authors identify four major analytical themes including community and consumer nutrition environments, other environmental factors, individual coping strategies or ways of shopping, and purchasing decisions. They conclude by stressing the need to understand how individual and environmental factors interact in the food environment.

### *2.3. Shopping as a practice*

By focusing on the individual, the psycho-economic literature neglects the social and cultural dimensions of shopping. On the contrary, the socio-cultural approach focuses on these dimensions. For example, Griffith (2003) investigates the meanings associated by consumers with shopping from lifetime shopping experiences, while Haytko and Baker (2004) see retail spaces as social spaces where relationships are maintained. However, the socio-cultural approach neglects the material aspects of practices (Cochoy, 2008). By seeing shopping strategies as “cognitive devices – enabled and supported/reproduced by a socio-material context” (Fuentes, 2014), the shopping-as-practice approach can address these shortcomings.

Practice theories advocate for an alternative approach to consumer studies which is not based on consumers' rationality but focuses on practices rather than on individuals (Halkier and Jensen, 2011). They focus on daily routines and study the arrangements of actions in their spatio-temporal dimensions (Schatzki, 2005). The most widely employed definition of practices is Reckwitz's, which describes a practice as “a whole and stabilized ‘configuration’ consisting of several elements, interconnected to one another: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, “things” and their use, a background

knowledge in the forms of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and emotional knowledge” (Reckwitz, 2002). According to Shove et al. (2012), the "elements" that constitute practices are the material dimension, meanings and competences.

Shopping as practice has been defined by Røpke (2009) as “one practice among others in daily life – a way of procuring many of the goods and services consumed in the course of other practices”. As such, a shopping practice is constituted by a combination of material dimensions (the physical stores or points of sale), meanings (shopping as part of taking care of the family) and competencies (product knowledge or bargaining skill). The shopping-as-practice approach is thus particularly relevant for our research aims and will be used in this study.

### **3. Retail choice and shopping practices in Vietnam**

#### *3.1. Food and food retailing context in Vietnam*

Vietnam is a predominantly agricultural country. With an annual income per capita of over \$2,300, World Bank (2018) considers Vietnam to belong to the lower middle-income group of emerging countries. Food plays a crucial role in the lives of consumers and access to safe food is of great concern due to the established excessive amounts of chemical fertilizers and dangerous pesticides used in production practices to increase yields (Figuié and Anh, 2004; Figuié et al., 2004; Nhung and Pensupar, 2015). The food retailing system is in a process of change with public policy trends towards placing supermarket development at “the core of strategies aiming to ensure access to safe food” (Wertheim-heck et al., 2015). Modern food retailing in Hanoi, and Vietnam generally, is now characterized by a large number of small to medium-scale retailers (minimarkets, safe vegetables shops) and a few large supermarket chains. Traditional food retailing comprises a wide variety of retail types including formal wet markets, informal street markets and mobile sellers (Fig. 1).

Vietnam is considered one of the “newcomers” to the “supermarket revolution” in developing countries (Reardon et al., 2012) with the first supermarket opened in Hanoi in 1995. Since then, the structure of food retailing has changed radically. However, although traditional retail formats are being replaced by supermarkets and hypermarkets and modern retail channels are expanding fast, Vietnam's food retail sector is still dominated by many small traditional sellers.



Fig. 1. Illustration of different vegetable retail outlets in Hanoi.

Supermarket



Formal wet market



Minimarket



Informal street market



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Safe vegetable shop



Peddlers/Mobile seller



Source: Researcher's photographs

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The capital Hanoi is home to an estimated population of 7.8 million and is divided into 12 urban districts, one district-level town, and 17 rural districts. These are further divided into town-lets, communes, and wards. Over the last 5 years, Hanoi has witnessed impressive development in its food retail landscape, with new formats via modern channels. According to the data of the Hanoi Department of Industry and Trade in 2018, there were 588 supermarkets, minimarkets and safe vegetables shops and 110 formal wet markets selling fresh vegetables in the city's 12 central urban districts. Notably, after the now-dominant brand VinGroup decided to distribute its own agricultural products and establish its own farms, 12 new VinMart supermarkets appeared, followed by 363 minimarkets named VinMart Plus (VinMart+). This has resulted in significant changes in the food environment.

It is widely acknowledged that supermarkets in emerging markets face particular difficulties in fresh food retailing (Humphrey, 2007; Mergenthaler et al., 2009) and Vietnam also falls into this category. Vegetables are the second most important food group consumed in Vietnam after rice (Figuíé, 2003; Figuíé and Anh, 2004; Nhung and Pensupar, 2015). Recent research shows that traditional channels continue to dominate daily vegetable purchasing practices (Cadilhon et al., 2003; Jensen and Peppard, 2007; Maruyama and Trung, 2012, 2007).

There has been indiscriminate use of chemical inputs in agriculture which has led to severe environmental and public health problems in Vietnam and especially in Hanoi (Nhung and Pensupar 2015; Hoi et al. 2016). The vast majority are smallholders, who have increased the use of chemicals to safeguard and intensify their production (Hoi et al. 2009; Schreinemachers et al. 2017). Consequently, consumers are calling for more clarity and control over their food, facing a changing food system driven by sprawling

urbanization and in which food scandals and foodborne diseases are of great concern (Wertheim-heck et al., 2015). In response to these concerns, modern distribution outlets sell their own controlled agricultural products. With a legal framework in transition, the development of modern distribution outlets in the city is currently encouraged in an attempt to solve perceived problems of food insecurity.

### *3.2. Consumer shopping behavior and shopping practices in Vietnam*

Vegetable retail markets in Vietnam have been studied by a number of researchers over the last two decades. Most of these studies focus on individual retail choices (e.g. Figuié, 2003; Hoang and Nakayasu, 2006; Figuié and Moustier, 2009; The Center for Global Food and Resources (University of Adelaide), 2018), but some focus on shopping practices (Wertheim-Heck et al., 2014, 2015; Wertheim-Heck and Spaargaren, 2016). These studies consider food safety (Wertheim-Heck et al., 2014, 2015; Wertheim-Heck and Spaargaren, 2016), socio-economic factors and especially income (Figuié and Moustier, 2009; Wertheim-heck et al., 2015), as well as product/store attributes, especially price and freshness (Maruyama and Trung, 2010; Wertheim-heck et al., 2015), as the main factors affecting consumers' choice of vegetable retail outlets. Other factors include convenience (proximity), the relationship with sellers and consumers' habit of not storing food (Figuié and Moustier, 2009; Wertheim-Heck et al., 2014, 2015; Wertheim-Heck and Spaargaren, 2016). Accordingly, recent research conducted by Wageningen University & Research in 2019 reveals that the main drivers of wet-market and street-market shopping include product attributes (price, diversity, freshness and availability), convenient location, enjoyment and food safety. Moreover, supermarkets are too expensive for poor households (Figuié and Moustier, 2009).

Taking a shopping-as-practice approach in order to explain the persistence of street-market shopping for vegetables in Hanoi, Wertheim-Heck et al. (2014) identified different consumer vegetable shopping practices including traditional established practices and modern individualistic ones. The formers are space-constrained and socially driven, i.e. these consumers combine vegetable purchasing with other social engagements, whereas the latter are time-constrained and adopted by consumers whose time allocated for vegetable shopping is in competition with other daily activities. Wertheim-Heck and Spaargaren (2016) made a distinction between six shopping practices: three of them do not involve specific points of sale (self-provisioning, kinship shopping, i.e. obtaining vegetables from relatives, and farmer shopping) and the other three involve points of sale: market shopping, safe vegetable outlet shopping and supermarket shopping. However, the study did not explore potential cross-shopping practices.

The studies by Wertheim-Heck et al. (2014) provide an understanding of shopping practices in Hanoi but do not consider cross-shopping, focus on practitioners or study the different dimensions of practices. The aim of our research is therefore to build on these previous studies by trying to understand both shopping as a practice but also the individuals who perform it. As Fuentes (2014) did in an effort to understand how consumers manage to consume green, we also draw on practice theory to understand the strategies developed by individuals in their shopping practices.

In order to better understand the shopping and cross-shopping practices, this study relies on a shopping-as-practice approach and a qualitative methodology.

## **4. Methodology**

### *4.1. Research design and sample selection*

This paper seeks to advance the knowledge of current shopping practices in Vietnam, which have been predominantly approached through a number of quantitative studies. The review by Brown and Dant (2008) concludes that too few studies in retail marketing use qualitative methods and the field might benefit from further possible insights based on qualitative methodologies. This research aims to study shopping practices in relation to the individuals who engage in them. To understand phenomena from the perspective of research participants is one of the most important purposes of qualitative research, and this is also recognized as a key approach in developing a comprehensive understanding of food-related phenomena (Harris et al. 2009). This paper thus used a qualitative approach and qualitative content analysis in order to better understand the construction of reality from the viewpoint of the study's participants.

79 semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted with adults aged over 20 and residing in 6 central urban districts of Hanoi (Appendix A). This research sample was constructed in order to identify individuals who would provide alternative perspectives on retail format choice and shopping practices. A number of potential participants were initially identified through the researchers' existing contacts in the community. The list was then expanded by means of snowballing to reach a quota sample of 12–15 interviews for each district. Interview participants included both sexes but, unsurprisingly, more than 95% of them are women as they are the main “gatekeepers” of Vietnamese households. Participants were of varying ages, levels of mobility, domestic and employment situations. The researcher who conducted onsite research is from the localities and so speaks the local Vietnamese language. This cultural familiarity helps enhance the authenticity of the interviews, as well as minimizing language and cultural barriers

(Mukherjee et al. 2020). Participants were interviewed mainly in their home or place of work, and were assured of the anonymity and confidentiality of the interviews. The interviews lasted an average of at least 45 minutes and were audio-recorded and later transcribed.

#### *4.2. Interview guide*

The interviewer used a semi-structured interview guide to ask participants open-ended questions about their personal vegetable shopping practices, their life experiences related to food shopping and retail format choice. Open-ended questions were followed with further follow-ups such as “Tell me more about that” or “Could you explain that further?” A flexible approach was employed instead of a fixed “research protocol” where each respondent is asked the same question in the same order.

#### *4.3. Data analysis*

The transcribed texts were subjected to manual content analysis (Krippendorff, 2004, 1980). The qualitative inferences were made during the coding process which included open coding, creating categories and abstraction (Elo and Kyngäs, 2008). The transcripts were first coded for the words and phrases that participants used to describe their shopping practices and retail format choice. A summary sheet was then prepared for each participant including socio-demographic information, retail shopping practices and every particular related factor. Vertical analysis was used for each participant, followed by horizontal analysis to synthesize all the transcripts, allowing for the construction of categories and subcategories (Appendix C).

## **5. Results**

### *5.1. Shopping and cross-shopping practices*

When the participants were asked about their shopping habits for vegetables, diverse shopping practices were revealed. Based mainly on the nature of formats and the number of retail outlets that participants cited, the authors identified 5 predominant types of shopping practices (refer to Appendix B for details regarding practitioners):

- Type 1: “Selective tradition” involves going (usually walking) only to traditional retail formats (traditional formal markets, informal markets or mobile sellers) when buying vegetables.
- Type 2: “Limited cross-shopping” involves relying mainly on traditional retail formats but sometimes incorporating limited modern retail formats.

- Type 3: “Diverse cross-shopping” involves varying the sources of vegetable purchases between traditional and modern formats.
- Type 4: “Supermarket shopping” involves driving to one supermarket or another to buy vegetables.
- Type 5: “Cross-shopping within modern formats” involves cross-shopping between different types of modern retail outlets (i.e. crossing from a supermarket to a safe vegetable store or minimarket).

## 5.2. Factors related to shopping and cross-shopping practices

The common themes (sub-categories) that emerged from our vertical and horizontal analyses include three factors – (1) physical food environment, (2) personal environment and (3) individual factors – and one category for shopping strategies. Appendix C provides sample verbatim, summaries and subcategories for the food environment category.

### 5.2.1. Physical food environment: general food environment and local food environment

#### **General food environment**

Great concerns about problems in the food safety system and the hazards associated with the intensification of agricultural production and agrochemical contamination were expressed. (“*With everything we read and hear on the media, I feel really insecure about the quality of the food that I buy for my family. Especially vegetables, which are easily contaminated with pesticides*”, Type 5 working woman in her 40s). This high level of uncertainty in the current food environment in general can lead consumers to adopt cross-shopping and diversify the products bought from each retail outlet. (“*Well, I began to buy vegetables from VinMart as soon as they started selling their own produce. I feel a bit more secure with the vegetables there since they are a big brand. I still shop at the nearby wet market because it is convenient and there are some culinary herbs that VinMart does not provide*”, Type 3 working woman in her 30s).

#### **Local physical food environment**

Consumers live in different food environments and levels of awareness of the local food environment and changes in it vary a lot. While type 1 and 2 practitioners showed little interest in new shops or newly opened retail formats, others showed great awareness of big modern retail brands (types 4 and 5) or safe vegetables shops (type 3).

Some participants mentioned the availability of different modern retail formats as a factor that affects their choice. For example, one participant referred to her limited choice of retail formats as a result of her house's geographical location (Appendix C), whereas participants who live in Hoan Kiem district were more prone to shop from peddlers and informal street markets as they live in the so-called "tourist district" where there is less available space to build big supermarkets. (*"It is very convenient. Every morning the peddlers pass by, or sometimes they stop out in front of the alley leading to my house. I even have the phone number of that lady so I can call her in advance and ask her to drop by my house on her way"*, Type 1 working woman in her 50s). Participants living in Dong Da and Hai Ba Trung often expressed more satisfaction with the number of retail formats from which they can choose. (*"We have a VinMart Plus at the corner next to Cho xanh Kim Lien, a Hapro just opposite, and a bigger VinMart down Dong Tac road. Many choices! I can drop by any of them on my way to the gym, on my way back home, or on my way to take my grandchild to school. Whatever I feel like. It is great to have choices"*, Type 3 retired woman in her 50s). These two districts have much higher population density as well as retail format density. Participants in Ha Dong favor informal markets for fresh vegetables as they claim the distance to supermarkets is greater.

### 5.2.2. Personal environment

Content analysis indicated that social networks play an important role in shopping practices. These networks include (1) family members and/or (2) peers in the workplace/interactive social circles.

#### **Role of family members**

When reflecting on which types of vegetables they choose to buy and where they go to buy them, participants explained that much of their consideration is based on the opinions of family members. By paying attention to other members' vegetable consumption preferences, participants figure out what they will include in their grocery shopping, and decide where to purchase those items. The sense of the nurturing role within the family was a prominent indicator of motherhood for many participants. (*"Because my husband really like cress (cai xoong). It's seasonal and I don't like it so I only go to wet markets to buy that type for my husband. He can eat it but I won't and I don't let our daughter eat it either. In my mind that vegetable is easily contaminated because of the way it is grown"*, Type 3 working woman in her 30s). Some participants stop buying products not to the liking of their family members. When shopping in supermarkets, some shoppers are curious and willing to try new products. But ultimately, if someone in

the family does not like a product, they will not buy it again. (*“Oh I tried to buy the new violetlike colored salad once when I saw it in VinMart. I found it quite nice, but then my husband and son didn’t like it much, so I did not buy the vegetable there again. I only shop there (the supermarket) for vegetables that I cannot find in normal markets. If they (the husband and son) don’t like it then what’s the point?”*, Type 3 working woman in her 40s).

Finally, supermarket shopping can be seen as a leisure activity at weekends or on holidays, especially by young women with small children or grandmothers with grandchildren. (*“My little grandchild likes it a lot when I take her to the supermarket, you know, children get excited at those places. That new Big C supermarket is new, it is big and has many shops with lights, it’s all fascinating. When she stays over at our place, it’s a joy to take her there and I can do my shopping at the same time!”*, Type 2 retired woman in her 50s).

### **Role of peers in workplace/interactive social circles**

As for working female shoppers, discussions with and suggestions from their working peers played an important role as a reference information source. Shoppers who enjoy talking to their co-workers often took suggestions from them about tastes, prices and potentially “clean” produce to try and shop via new retail formats. (*“Since we work at the same place and often talk during breaks, we are pretty close. When we saw the new Vin Plus opening near our company, we all went there to buy vegetables. After a while, I got used to going there”*, Type 2 working woman in her 20s).

Non-working participants also turn to people from their social groups when choosing which products to buy and where to buy them. One participant who often takes part in tai chi groups frequently talked about how she had seen others from the group who were buying from specific shops/market stalls and it made her trust those places more. (*“They are people with knowledge, I think that if she goes to that store the products should be good so I go there too”*, Type 3 retired woman in her 50s). So benefiting from the guidance/opinions of others is not limited to the workplace but includes one’s overall interactive social network.

#### *5.2.3. Individual factors*

### **Role of generation**

Younger shoppers among the participants, especially those who are single and live alone, often mentioned shopping for food in general – and vegetables in particular – as something they “just want to



get done fast” and showed no interest in changing their habitual retail outlet. (*“Since I live alone and cook only for myself, I just want to do it fast [...] I have this seller that I often pass by on my way home. It is convenient and the price is ok so I buy there often [...] That new shop? I am not aware of it [...] There is that market just opposite? I don’t know, I did not really pay attention ...”*, Type 1 working woman in her 20s). For younger participants, their choice of supermarkets and safe vegetable stores is associated with their lack of bargaining skills. (*“After a long time living in the EU, I do not know how to estimate the price and how to negotiate for vegetables anymore. The price is fixed in supermarkets so it is better for me to go there”*, Type 4 working woman in her 40s). Conversely, older shoppers aged over 50 showed much stronger preferences for traditional markets. For these particular participants, the interpersonal experience at traditional markets plays an important role in their choice. (*“I want to be able to talk with people at the wet markets [...] I used to buy vegetables at supermarkets because they are packaged and convenient to store in the refrigerator but now that I am retired and have time, I want to feel the lively atmosphere at the wet markets again [...] In supermarkets there is no chit chat and familiar people saying hi to each other while shopping”*, Type 2 retired woman in her 50s).

### **Role of life path**

Changes in domains such as work status, family composition and income occur over the course of one’s life, affecting shopping practices. The changes in shopping practices mainly occur after people get married. For the traditional married couples living with their in-laws, some of the young wives interviewed do not engage much in food shopping if working full-time, as more than often the mother-in-law would take care of this task. This culture also enables some young cross-shoppers to free themselves from the responsibility of daily shopping and choose to patronize both wet markets and modern stores depending on their own time schedules. However, for those who still shop for food, this is quite stressful. Modern young nuclear families with higher incomes who are not living with their in-laws are more likely to adopt modern retail formats. (*“My in-laws live in their hometown and only come visit sometimes so I can cook anything I like for my husband. We both work full time and are quite busy. Personally I prefer salads and light/healthy meals so I shop at safe shops and supermarkets. When you eat salads you need to buy quality vegetables”*, Type 3 working woman in her 20s).

Major changes also occur after having one’s first child. (*“When I was very young and on my own, I only shopped at wet markets. But since my first baby was born, I have paid more attention to her food and I only buy vegetables from safe shops for her. Their stomachs are much more sensitive and I don’t want*

her to get upset or ill. Me and my husband can take vegetables from wet markets, but not her, as she is still little”, Type 3 working woman in her 30s).

### 5.3. Shopping and cross-shopping strategies

Given the stress-inducing concerns over food quality and food safety, and other factors related to each individual and their environment, several coping strategies are developed by consumers in their shopping practices. Two categories of strategies emerged: dominated by constraints and based on trust. These strategies may be combined.

#### 5.3.1. Strategies dominated by constraints: price and accessibility

**Price** prevents many participants from buying specific types of imported vegetables or vegetables delivered from the south. (“I bought all those vegetables from the VinMart plus close to my old place since I had special promotions from them. I had bought almost every household thing from that shop so I had a discount on buying vegetables. But now that I have just moved here and things have changed a bit I am not sure if I will keep buying vegetables from VinMart plus. They are actually quite expensive when I have a close look at the price!”, Type 3 working woman in her 30s). Type 1 and type 2 practitioners all said that the price of vegetables from modern retail outlets can be 1.5 to 2 times more expensive than those from traditional retailers so this limits their freedom to shop there. Accordingly, although vegetables are said to be a relatively inexpensive part of one’s diet, some less common types of vegetables such as red cabbage or mushrooms, which are above average in price, are still described as “less consumed”. Similarly, even though the amount spent daily on vegetables is considered to be really low in comparison with other food items, these amounts differ significantly depending on the respondent’s income level. Lower-income participants’ spending ranges from 12,000 to 20,000VND (approximately \$0.50-\$0.86) while those with higher incomes may spend more than 60,000VND (approximately \$2.60) each time they go shopping for vegetables. Their choice of shopping location varies according to the amount of money spent.

**Accessibility** has different meanings for different types of shopping practice: parking availability, proximity and walkability, or time.

For Type 4 and type 5 practitioners – the only ones who had a car –, accessibility was evaluated by the parking available for their vehicle. (“I always prefer Big C Thang Long although it is a bit further than

*the one near our house because they have big parking lots that are easy to navigate and well organized”,* Type 5 working woman in her 40s).

In contrast, especially for consumers who are retired, some shopping trips more typically start walking from home, and *walkability* is therefore a key priority (Types 1 and 2 in particular).

*Time* was often identified as an important factor of accessibility, especially for working participants when choosing where to go shopping. In Hoan Kiem, the central district in the old city of Hanoi, buying vegetables from mobile sellers is convenient for those who are small street sellers themselves or appreciate the availability of mobile sellers from the biggest wholesale markets passing by their house every day. Shopping practices appear linked to storing and cooking practices: while types 4 and 5 often reduce the frequency of food shopping to a minimum and keep food in the refrigerator, types 1 and 2 mostly prefer to consume fresh produce daily.

### 5.3.2. *Strategies based on trust: (1) self-confidence and trust in skills vs (2) trust in the seller*

**Self-confidence** appeared to be of high importance in determining “Quality” for older consumers participating in the study. Perceived expertise and personal self-confidence are key factors when it comes to choosing where to buy vegetables. (“*I can tell just by the colors and the freshness of the produce, of course*”, Type 1 retired woman in her 50s). The ability to bargain for better price was also mentioned by younger respondents as part of what built their self-confidence in choosing where to shop. Conversely, some cross-shoppers expressed less confidence in their ability to differentiate products and bargain at wet markets. Their lack of self-confidence was also associated with the difficulty of bargaining for the best prices; they therefore opt for modern retailers (“*I also hesitated because I do not want to have to bargain for the price. For frequent consumers they (the sellers) set one price and for newcomers like me they might set another. In supermarkets and stores the prices are listed so I do not need to think about it*”, Type 3 working woman in her 40s).

The second strategy is based on **Trust in the seller**. Consumers may depend on their sellers to build trust in the quality of the produce. This trust may be in the seller at the market (“*I always shop with this lady at our nearby market, I trust her to sell good produce. I have known her for a very long time*”, Type 1 retired woman in her 60s), or in modern retail formats (“*I am very afraid to buy vegetables from wet markets [...] I believe in the supermarket(s). Since they are a big brand, they must have some sort of system to control quality*” (Type 4 working woman in her 50s). “*Because my stomach is more sensitive than other people, I often have problems eating vegetables bought from wet markets but not from Big C supermarkets. I trust them and often shop there. I trust their products because I have tried them*”, Type 5 retired woman

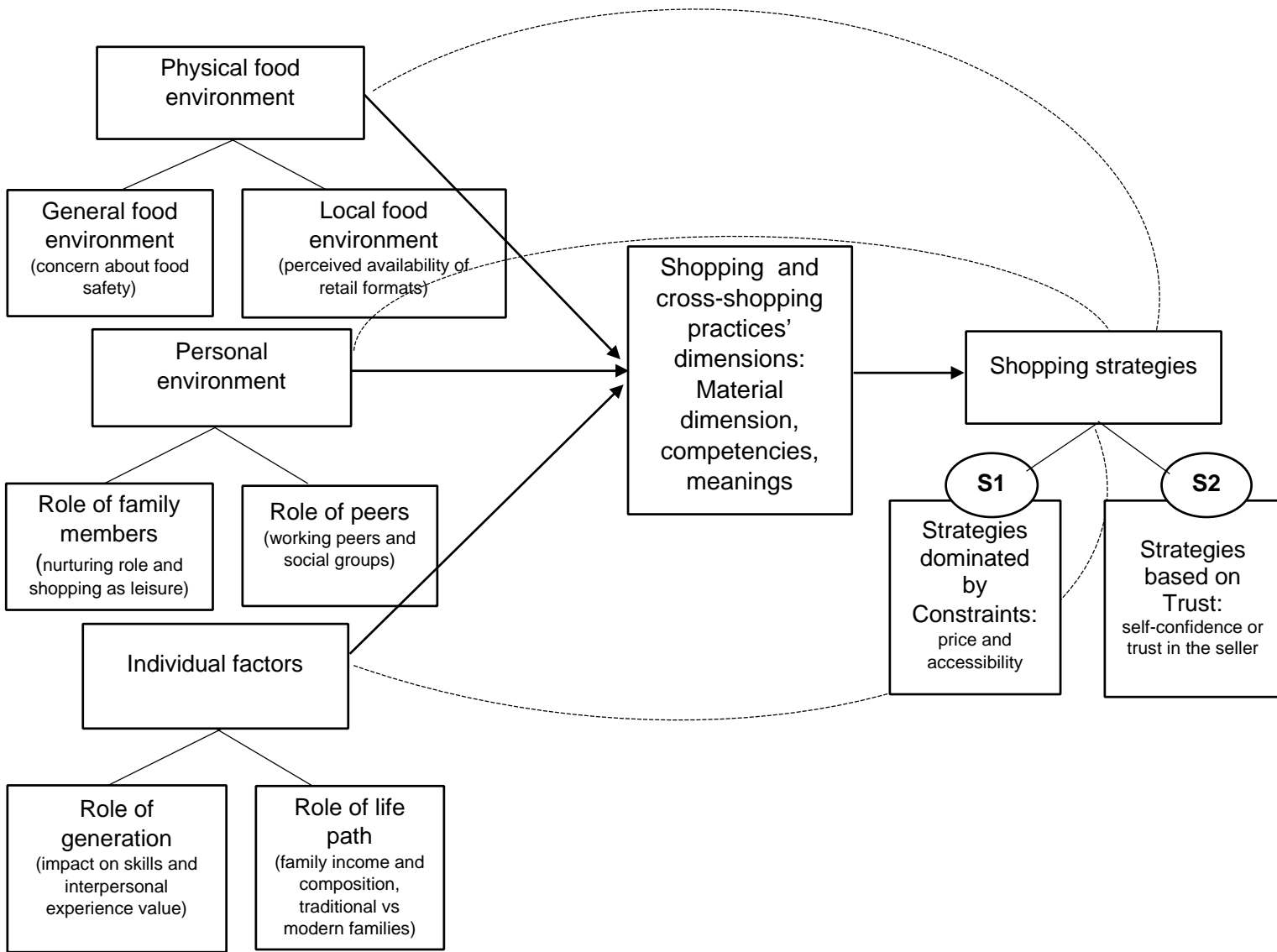
in her 50s). Besides, participants may enjoy a steady and direct relationship with local sellers at wet markets established after many years living in the same area, or enjoy the services provided by staff at shops or supermarkets. Based on the experiences and interpersonal interactions accumulated through shopping trips, their relationship with sellers/staff have strengthened and this causes some of them to remain loyal even after moving away.

Finally, shopping practice strategies may be based both on constraints and trust (*“I choose that lady because she always offers me a good price. I did try other sellers, but she’s the best since I am a frequent customer”*, Group 2 working woman in her 40s).

#### *5.4. The proposed framework of shopping practices in emerging urban markets*

A proposition of framework is presented in Fig. 2 that summarizes the findings of this study. The framework illustrates the factors influencing shopping practices in emerging urban markets and the link between such factors and shopping and cross-shopping strategies.

Fig. 2. Framework of shopping practices in emerging urban markets



## 6. Discussion

The high level of food insecurity is a critical challenge for development in Vietnam. Simultaneously, the development of modern retail outlets in the capital Hanoi over the past 10 years symbolizes the modernization process currently taking place in the food distribution sector. While modern retail stores are being favored by public development policies, open-air markets and street selling activities still

dominate the consumption of fresh food. Previous studies in Hanoi have shown that supermarkets are largely inaccessible to the poor and have highlighted policy gaps at both national and local levels. However, these studies focused only on poor people.

### *6.1. Diversity of shopping and cross-shopping strategies*

This study aimed to understand the shopping practices of Hanoian consumers with different profiles. It identified five shopping practices of differing natures and degrees of cross-shopping, and different strategies used to accomplish these practices, dominated by constraints or based on trust (self-confidence or trust in the seller). The analysis showed the relationships between the identified factors (physical food environment, personal environment and individual factors) and shopping and cross-shopping strategies and between these factors and the dimensions of shopping practices.

By identifying five types of shopping and cross-shopping practices, which differ in terms of the extent of cross-shopping and the nature of the retail formats, this study builds on the previous work by WertheimHeck and Spaargaren (2016), who made a distinction between market shopping, safe vegetable outlet shopping and supermarket shopping but without exploring potential cross-shopping practices.

The results regarding the socio-material context and other factors confirm some of the findings of previous studies conducted in Hanoi (Maruyama and Trung, 2007; Figuié and Moustier, 2009; Wertheimheck et al., 2015; Wageningen University & Research, 2019): a combination of factors such as geographical inaccessibility, income limitations and mobility constitute impediments on food-insecure households from fully participating in the modern retail market. This study goes beyond previous research such as Figuié and Moustier (2009) and the analysis of the risks and benefits of changes in the food system. Whereas these authors focused on the accessibility of supermarkets among poor urban consumers, this study considers a wider range of consumers from different social groups in an effort to understand their different shopping strategies. While poor consumers often rely on traditional food retailers, there is also a notable trend in which consumers combine both traditional and modern food retailers to suit their needs and requirements. The approach adopted herein also challenges the argument made by Gilboa and Mitchell (2020) that purchase behavior and spending rates are impacted more by the economic situation than culture in poor countries. Indeed, this study builds on previous results by Wertheim-heck et al. (2015) by showing that revenue and accessibility are not sufficient to explain shopping practices. There are participants who are not notably disadvantaged in terms of accessing modern retail formats, nor do they fall into the category of lower-income households, but display the type 1 practice of Selective tradition. Consumers

are seen to actively adapt to their local food environment based on their different levels of awareness of the changes taking place.

This study went further by showing the relationships between the identified factors (physical food environment, personal environment and individual factors) and (1) shopping and cross-shopping strategies and (2) the dimensions of shopping practices.

### *6.2. Relationships between the identified factors and shopping and cross-shopping strategies: accessibility and trust*

The identified factors are linked to the nature of the shopping strategies. Regarding strategies dominated by constraints, the importance of price confirms previous studies that highlighted the financial constraints on poor consumers when accessing supermarkets (Figuíé and Bricas 2010; Figuíé and Nguyen 2006; Moustier et al. 2009; Wertheim-heck et al. 2014, 2015). However, while previous studies focused on poor consumers, our results show that price is a shared concern, and that its importance is also linked to one's life path. Accessibility has long been identified as an important factor of retail format choice, and convenience was often chosen over every other aspect by participants discussing their main shopping trip (Moustier and Loc 2005). However, accessibility has been assimilated to proximity in previous studies (Moustier and Loc 2005; Maruyama and Trung, 2010), while the results of this study reveal that accessibility has different meanings for different types of shopper: parking availability for those who own a car, proximity and walkability for those who shop near their home or place of work, time for those who work. Accessibility therefore seems related to both the local food environment and personal factors linked to life path such as work status, family composition and income. Wertheim-Heck et al. (2014) had already identified different shopping practices including traditional space-constrained and socially driven practices, and modern time-constrained individualistic ones. Our study shows that beyond this opposition, the same time constraint can lead to different shopping and cross-shopping practices adopted by different practitioners. Besides, previous research had shown that consumers' shopping behavior is linked to their habit of not storing food (Figuíé and Moustier 2009; Wertheim-heck et al. 2014, 2015; Wertheim-Heck and Spaargaren 2016). Our results show that shopping practices are also related to cooking and eating practices. Therefore, it helps to understand how difficult it can be, especially for older shoppers, to change their practices.

Regarding strategies based on self-confidence or trust, the general food environment and concerns over food safety have consequences for the strategies used to judge the quality of a product: selfconfidence for those who have the skills and buy products from mobile sellers or at markets, and/or trust in the seller in markets. For those who are not self-confident, trust is of paramount importance. Results also show that consumers' competencies regarding food knowledge seem to be weaker in the young generation. Regarding strategies based on trust, our results show the role of peers in reinforcing trust in the seller.

### *6.3. Relationships between the identified factors and the dimensions of practices: the importance of competencies*

Besides, the shopping-as-practice approach makes it possible to link the factors mentioned (physical food environment, personal environment and individual factors) to the different dimensions of practices (material dimension, competencies and meanings). The general food environment has consequences on the necessary competencies to judge the quality of a product. The consumers who have not the necessary skills to judge this quality are reluctant to shop at wet markets. The local physical food environment shapes the material dimension of practices and involves specific constraints (location of the home or shops). The personal environment affects the meanings of the shopping practice, be they related to the sense of the nurturing role within the family or the pleasure experienced in chatting with the seller or discovering a new supermarket. Finally, individual factors are also related to all dimensions of practices. Generation has an impact on the competencies and meanings linked to shopping practices. Indeed, the ability to bargain for better price is confirmed as a skill developed by Vietnamese consumers (Wertheim-Heck et al. 2015), but this skill seems linked to generation, since it is less present in the younger generations, who by default turn to supermarkets. Besides, the meanings associated with shopping practices differ between older and young generations: whereas the notion of being a good parent seems common, older practitioners insist on the pleasure associated with their relationship with sellers (Figuíé and Moustier 2009; Wertheim-heck et al. 2014, 2015; Wertheim-Heck and Spaargaren 2016), but for younger shoppers or grandparents with their grandchildren, a visit to a supermarket may also be associated with leisure and pleasure. One's life path and changes to things like work status, family composition and income, also affect the dimensions of shopping practices. First, our results clearly show that factors such as disposable income or owning a car affect the material dimension of practices. In the same vein, having a child changes the meaning of the shopping practice because the sense of the nurturing role within the family is accentuated. The composition



of the household influences the skills needed, with a difference between traditional married couples who rely on their in-laws and modern ones who need to rely on their skills in their shopping practices.

## **7. Contributions, limits and conclusion**

Previous literature investigating consumers' behaviors in the context of food retailing in emerging markets has adopted either psycho-economic perspectives which focus on consumer choice and factors influencing it (e. g. individual attributes and store-related attributes, (Baltas and Papastathopoulou, 2003; Carpenter and Moore, 2006; Cervellon et al., 2015) or - for a very limited number of studies- a shopping as practice approach which focuses on practices and not on individuals, who are only considered as practice carriers. In choosing one or the other of these approaches, it is impossible to fully understand how individual and environmental factors interact and are related to shopping practices. Therefore, the main theoretical objective of this study was to combine these two approaches, using the shopping-as-practice approach but adding a focus on practitioners, in order to complete previous studies focusing only on the consumer or only on shopping practices. The main theoretical contribution of this study lies in the identification of different daily shopping practices and strategies, but also of their links with socio-material context and individual factors, combined in a proposition of framework. The theoretical implications of the study are twofold: related to the cross-shopping literature and to the shopping as practice approach. First, this research is, to our knowledge, the first to use practice theories to study cross-shopping. Instead of focusing on individual or store-related factors, it shows that cross-shopping is not merely a choice but a combination of different strategies based on constraints and/or trust. It calls for greater consideration of trust in retailing, as shown for specific markets such as organic markets (Hamzaoui-Essoussi et al., 2013). Second, this research calls for greater consideration of individuals in shopping as practice approaches. Indeed, shopping as practice approaches allow to understand shopping practices and take into account, albeit indirectly, physical food environment and personal environment, but do not explicitly consider individual factors. Yet, these individual factors may change the meanings of the practice and therefore, their maintenance.

The main managerial contribution lies in two recommendations that can be made both for public policy and for retailers. The first recommendation relates to the necessary diversity of retail outlets, the second to confidence building.

First, the results help us understand why consumers are more or less likely to incorporate new modern retailers into their everyday routines. These results are in line with Figuié and Moustier' (2009)

recommendations to maintain the present diversity of retail outlets in Hanoi as it fits the diversity of consumer groups and allows small-scale traders to maintain their livelihoods. They also support the recommendation by Wertheim-Heck et al. (2015) for flexible and customized retail modernization policies as opposed to the current trend of promoting supermarkets as a single, ideal-type form of food shopping. However, these authors had based this recommendation on their study of poor consumers, while this research shows that the diversity is necessary for all types of consumers, who, even with diverse revenues, adopt cross-shopping strategies.

Regarding confidence building, the results show that consumers' competencies regarding food knowledge seem to be weaker in the young generation. Hence some practices based on trust in supermarkets are also based on a lack of confidence regarding wet markets. It could thus be useful for the government to increase and better control the level of cleanliness and sanitation at wet markets. This would help ensure customers' trust in the food environment and the quality of produce sold. On the opposite, shopping practices at wet markets often rely on trust in the seller based on personal relationships. Modern retailers could also consider strategies to offer consumers a friendlier environment with enhanced interpersonal experiences and trust building between customers and sales staff.

However, these results are by nature qualitative and subject to certain limitations related to their generalizability. The first limitation is due to the nature of the study, which concentrates on urban consumers in central districts of Hanoi and only aims to understand practices, so no generalization can be made about the importance of each type of practice. Second, different factors should be studied in a systematic way, particularly cultural aspects and features of consumers' life paths associated with their food consumption practices. More generally, further research is needed to better understand the link between the factors mentioned (physical food environment, personal environment and individual factors) and the different dimensions of practices (material dimension, competencies and meanings). In the same vein, shopping practices should be studied in association with other routines such as cooking and consumption practices. Observations would deepen the understanding of the constitutive elements of practices and the link between shopping practices and other practices and eventually lead to new findings regarding consumers' awareness and acceptance or rejection of the food retailing transition.

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## Appendix A. Description of selected districts

Name of district	Description of districts	Population	Area	No. of formal wet markets (FWM)	No. of modern retails (MR)	Population density	Density of retail formats (over 100,000 people)	No. of participants
<b>Dong Da</b>	Local with highest population	<b>420,900</b>	10.09 km <sup>2</sup>	10	62	42,259/km <sup>2</sup>	2.38 FWM 14.7 MR	15 23.9 MR
<b>Tay Ho</b>	More polished and affluent and chosen location of expats	<b>168,300</b>	24 km <sup>2</sup>	9	39	7,012.5/km <sup>2</sup>	5.35 FWM 23.17 MR	12
<b>Hai Ba Trung</b>	More local and relaxed	<b>318,000</b>		7	76	31,516/km <sup>2</sup>	2.2 FWM	15
<b>Hoan Kiem</b>	Central with lots of tourists		5.29 km <sup>2</sup>	3	29	30,359/km <sup>2</sup>	1.86 FWM 18 MR	13
<b>Cau Giay</b>	Many new urban city's new centers	<b>266,800</b>	12.04 km <sup>2</sup>	67	22,159.5/	2.6 FWM 25.1 MR	12 developments commercial	Km <sup>2</sup> with
<b>Ha Dong</b>	Former capital city of Hà Tây Province, now an urban Hanoi's expansion in 2008	<b>319,800</b>	47.917 km <sup>2</sup>	14	29	6,674/km <sup>2</sup>	4.37 FWM 9 MR district after	12

\*Note: This table does not include informal street markets and peddlers

Types	Age	Car	Income class	Family size	District	No
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## Appendix B. Types of shopping and cross-shopping practices

<b>Type 1:</b> Selective tradition	- 50-60	2	none	Upper high	0	0-1 2-	8	Cau Giay	1
	40-50	5		High	0	3	5	Hai Ba Trung	4
	30-40	4		Middle high	10	4-6	10	Dong Da Ha	3
	20-30	5		Low middle	11			Dong	5
<b>Total 23/79</b>		7		Low	2			Hoan Kiem	4

$\frac{6}{4}$	<b>Type 2:</b>	60 - 50-	2	none	Upper high	0	0-1 2-	2	Cau Giay		Tay Ho
	Limited	60	11		High	1	3	16	Hai Ba Trung	6	
	crossshopping	40-50	4		Middle high	12	4-6	7	Dong Da	5	
		30-40	4		Low middle	11			Ha Dong	2	
	<b>Total 25/79</b>	20-30	4		Low	0			Hoan Kiem	2	
									Tay Ho	5	
										3	
	<b>Type 3:</b>	60 - 50-	2	none	Upper high	1	0-1 2-	1	Cau Giay	$\frac{1}{4}$	
	Diverse	60	5		High	5	3	12	Hai Ba Trung	3	
	crossshopping	40-50	1		Middle high	8	4-6	4	Dong Da	4	
		30-40	5		Low middle	2			Ha Dong	2	
	<b>Total 17/79</b>	20-30	4		Low	0			Hoan Kiem	3	
									Tay Ho	1	
										$\frac{1}{0}$	
	<b>Type 4:</b>	60 - 50-	1	2/3	Upper high	1	0-1 2-	0	Cau Giay	0	
	Supermarket	60s	1		High	2	3	0	Hai Ba Trung	0	
	shopping <b>Total</b>	40-50s	0		Middle high	0	4-6	3	Dong Da	1	
	3/79	30-40s	1		Low middle	0			Ha Dong	1	
		20-30s	0		Low	0			Hoan Kiem	0	
									Tay Ho	60 -	0
										$\frac{1}{2/16}$	
					Upper high	1	0-1	0	Cau Giay	$\frac{1}{3}$	

<b>Type 5:</b>	50-60s	2	High	7	2-3	5		
Cross-shoppers	40-50s	2	Middle high	3	4-6	6	Hai Ba Trung	2
within modern	30-40s	5	Low middle	0			Dong Da Ha	2
formats	20-30s	2	Low	0			Dong	2
<b>Total</b>	11/79						Hoan Kiem	1
							Tay Ho	1

## Appendix C. Categories and sub-categories sample

Verbatim	Summary of verbatim	Sub-categories (themes)	Categories
<p>“These days, quality is highly important because we see all the bad news in the media [...] After watching such news I have to think more carefully about where to go buy food.”</p> <p>(Type 3, retired woman in her 50s)</p>	Concern about quality	Raised concern over quality of the general food environment	
<p>“I have seen with my own eyes how they (farmers) were using unknown chemicals to increase yields [...] and the quality of the water nowadays is so horrible you see [...] I could never have faith in the types of vegetables sold at wet markets now, they are contaminated.” (Type 4, working woman in her 30s)</p>	Concern about quality		<b>Physical food environment</b>
<p>“Of course we have more places to go compared to 5–7 years ago, we have supermarkets and new stores everywhere now” (Type 3, retired woman in her 50s)</p>	Awareness of new retail outlets	Awareness about development of local physical food retail environment	
<p>“In this district we have a variety of shopping choices and it is very convenient.” (Type 3, working woman in her 30s)</p>	Awareness of available shops	Awareness about local food environment	
<p>“In this area we do not have many shops/stores, you know. Because beyond this small alley is the highway, so the choice is very limited” (Type 1, retired woman in her 50s)</p>	Awareness of limited choice of shops		

