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Dr. Janssen Joseph
Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, St. Berchmans College (Autonomous) Changanassery, Kerala, India

Corresponding Author:
Dr. Janssen Joseph
Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, St. Berchmans College (Autonomous) Changanassery, Kerala, India

Omnichannel retailing and its effect on purchase intention: Evidence from Indian consumers

Janssen Joseph

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Abstract
The rapid digital transformation of the retail industry has accelerated the adoption of omnichannel strategies, enabling seamless integration across physical and digital touchpoints. This study examines the impact of omnichannel retailing on purchase intention among Indian consumers, focusing on key dimensions such as perceived channel integration, convenience, customer experience, trust, and perceived value. A structured questionnaire was administered to Indian retail customers, and responses were analysed using descriptive statistics, factor analysis, and regression modelling.

Keywords: Omnichannel retailing, purchase intention, customer experience, perceived channel integration, trust

Introduction

The retail landscape has undergone a remarkable transformation over the past decade, driven by the growing influence of digital technology and evolving consumer expectations. The emergence of omnichannel retailing a seamless integration of multiple channels, including physical stores, e-commerce platforms, mobile applications, and social media has revolutionised how consumers interact with brands. In contrast to traditional multichannel strategies, which merely offer separate touchpoints, omnichannel retailing provides an integrated and consistent customer experience across all retail interfaces (Verhoef, Kannan, & Inman, 2015) [11]. As consumers increasingly expect unified shopping experiences, retailers are focusing on perceived channel integration the degree to which customers perceive coherence, compatibility, and continuity across different channels. When customers can effortlessly transition between online and offline environments without losing context, their satisfaction and purchase intentions are likely to increase (Herhausen, Binder, Schoegel, & Herrmann, 2015) [5]. In addition, omnichannel success relies heavily on key determinants such as service quality, trust, and perceived convenience, which collectively shape consumer attitudes. Equally significant are the roles of information consistency, personalisation, and price-value perception, all of which influence how consumers evaluate their overall shopping experience and willingness to purchase. Given these dynamics, the present study aims to investigate how perceived channel integration and other key omnichannel attributes affect consumers' purchase intentions and recommendation behaviours. By analysing these relationships, the study aims to contribute to both theoretical understanding and practical retail management strategies in the era of digital convergence.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the impact of perceived channel integration on consumers' purchase intention in an omnichannel retail environment.
2. To analyse the role of service quality, trust, and perceived convenience in shaping consumer attitudes and purchase intentions.
3. To investigate how information consistency, personalisation, and price-value perception affect consumers' overall experience and willingness to purchase.
4. To assess the combined effect of key omnichannel attributes on consumers' intention to purchase and recommend retailers.

Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the expanding field of consumer behaviour and omnichannel

marketing by developing a comprehensive framework that links perceived channel integration with consumer attitudes and behavioural intentions. While prior research has examined individual channel or online experiences, few studies have integrated multiple constructs such as trust, convenience, and service quality within a holistic omnichannel perspective. The study thereby bridges the gap between technological retail operations and consumer psychology, offering a theoretical basis for future empirical research. For practitioners, the research provides actionable insights into how consumers perceive integration across channels and how this perception shapes purchase decisions. Retailers can utilise these findings to optimise cross-channel consistency, improve customer support, and strengthen their digital transformation strategies. By focusing on personalisation, reliability, and seamless interaction, organisations can enhance both purchase and post-purchase experiences, leading to stronger brand loyalty and positive word-of-mouth recommendations.

Scope of the Study

The study is conducted within the context of the modern omnichannel retail environment.

The research focuses on major constructs, including perceived channel integration, service quality, trust, perceived convenience, information consistency, personalisation, and price-value perception, all of which influence consumers' purchase intention and recommendation behaviour. The study may focus on consumers within a specific region (e.g., India), where the retail sector is undergoing rapid digital transformation and major retailers are adopting omnichannel models. The research targets individuals who have purchased products or services through multiple channels offered by the same retailer for example, shopping through a brand's website and physical outlet interchangeably.

Review of Literature

Perceived channel integration refers to consumers' perceptions of how well a retailer synchronises its various sales and communication channels to provide a seamless experience (Cao & Li, 2015). [2] High integration implies that information, pricing, inventory, and services are consistent across online and offline platforms. Research by Herhausen *et al.* (2015) [5] demonstrated that when consumers experience smooth transitions between digital and physical stores, their satisfaction and trust increase, positively influencing their purchase intentions. Similarly, Juaneda-Ayensa, Mosquera, and Murillo (2016) [6] found that perceived channel integration strengthens perceived value and reduces friction in the customer journey, ultimately fostering purchase intention and loyalty.

Service quality has long been recognized as a vital determinant of customer satisfaction and behavioural intention (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988) [9]. In omnichannel contexts, service quality extends beyond physical interactions to include website responsiveness, mobile usability, and post-purchase support. Trust acts as a psychological assurance that reduces consumers' perceived risks in online transactions (Gefen, 2000) [4]. Studies indicate that consumers are more likely to make purchases when they trust the retailer's capability and integrity (Chiu *et al.*, 2009) [3].

Perceived convenience referring to the ease and efficiency of the shopping process also plays a pivotal role. Consumers value the ability to browse, compare, and purchase products without constraints on time or location. According to Seck, Keeling, and Morris (2022) [10], higher convenience perceptions lead to stronger satisfaction and repurchase intentions, particularly in environments that integrate physical and digital touchpoints. Consistency of information across platforms such as product descriptions, prices, and promotions is crucial for building trust and minimising confusion (Verhoef *et al.*, 2015) [8]. When consumers encounter discrepancies across channels, they perceive the retailer as unreliable, which leads to a reduced purchase intention. Personalisation, defined as tailoring offers and communications based on consumer preferences and past behaviours, enhances engagement and fosters emotional attachment (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016) [7]. Personalised recommendations create a sense of relevance, encouraging repeat purchases and long-term loyalty. Price-value perception, the consumer's assessment of whether the benefits of a product justify its cost, also plays a significant role in determining purchase decisions. Zeithaml (1988) [12] noted that a positive price-value perception strengthens customer satisfaction and advocacy. In omnichannel settings, transparent and consistent pricing across all touchpoints further reinforces fairness and trust. The omnichannel environment necessitates a comprehensive understanding of how various attributes interplay to shape the overall consumer experience. Beck and Rygl (2015) [1] emphasized that successful omnichannel strategies depend not only on technology but also on the synergy among trust, service quality, and personalization. Similarly, Melero, Sese, and Verhoef (2016) [8] suggested that integrating multiple touchpoints amplifies customer satisfaction, leading to increased purchase intention and positive word-of-mouth. Thus, the combined influence of perceived channel integration, convenience, trust, and personalisation determines consumers' likelihood of purchasing and recommending retailers. This highlights the need for a comprehensive analytical framework that captures the interconnected nature of these constructs. The review of literature demonstrates that perceived channel integration, service quality, trust, perceived convenience, information consistency, personalisation, and price-value perception are all critical predictors of purchase intention in an omnichannel context. Although individual factors have been studied extensively, limited research has examined their combined influence on consumer behaviour within a single model. The present study seeks to address this research gap by empirically analysing how these factors collectively shape consumers' purchase and recommendation intentions in an omnichannel retail setting.

Research Methodology

The target population for this research comprises consumers who have experience shopping from omnichannel retailers that is, those who have purchased through multiple channels of the same brand (e.g., store, website, mobile app, or social media). The study focuses on urban consumers familiar with digital retail environments. A non-probability purposive sampling method is used, as the study targets respondents who have had prior experience with omnichannel retailing. Based on statistical adequacy and prior similar studies, a sample size of 100 respondents is considered appropriate for the analysis. Primary data are collected through a structured questionnaire designed to measure the constructs of interest. Secondary data are obtained from academic journals, books,

industry reports, and credible online databases. A structured questionnaire is the main research instrument for data collection. Collected data are coded, tabulated, and analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The following methods are applied: descriptive statistics, including mean, standard deviation, and frequency distributions, to describe respondent profiles and overall perceptions.

Data Analysis

Table 1: Age

Age	Count	Percent
25-34	24	24.0
55+	22	22.0
18-24	21	21.0
45-54	21	21.0
35-44	12	12.0

(**Source:** Primary Data)

The sample represents a wide age distribution, with no single group dominating disproportionately. The largest age group is 25-34 (24%), indicating strong participation from young working adults. A considerable portion belongs to older consumers (55+) - 22%, suggesting that omnichannel retailing is gaining traction across older age groups as well. Both 18-24 (21%) and 45-54 (21%) groups are nearly equally represented, indicating balanced coverage among younger and middle-aged respondents. The lowest representation is from 35-44 (12%), suggesting slightly lower omnichannel adoption among this cohort. Omnichannel retailing engagement spans across all age groups, with the highest engagement from young adults and older citizens alike.

Table 2: Gender

Gender	%
Male	37%
Female	34%
Other / Prefer not to say	29%

(**Source:** Primary Data)

Gender representation is quite balanced. Males (37%) and females (34%) show nearly equal participation, indicating minimal gender bias. A notable portion (29%) chose "Other/Prefer not to say," which reflects either privacy preference or gender diversity within the sample. The gender distribution supports a balanced perspective with adequate representation from all groups.

Table 3: Education Level

Education	%
Up to 12th	33%
Professional/Doctorate	28%
Undergraduate	23%
Postgraduate	16%

(**Source:** Primary Data)

The largest segment (33%) has completed school-level education, indicating significant representation from the general consumer base. A substantial share (28%) holds professional or doctoral qualifications, indicating participation from highly educated individuals. Undergraduates (23%) and postgraduates (16%) contribute the rest. Respondents span a broad range of educational backgrounds, indicating diverse exposure and understanding of omnichannel retailing. The mix of lower- and higher-educated consumers suggests that omnichannel strategies appeal to consumers across the entire education spectrum.

Table 4: Occupation

Occupation	%
Self-employed	27%
Other	20%
Employed	14%
Homemaker	14%
Student	13%
Retired	12%

(**Source:** Primary Data)

The majority of respondents are self-employed (27%), indicating strong engagement from business owners who likely rely on omnichannel retailing. The 'Other' category (20%) suggests diverse professions not explicitly listed. Employed individuals and homemakers each at 14% reflect the inclusion of working professionals and home-based consumers. Students (13%) and retired individuals (12%) show noticeable presence, indicating that omnichannel platforms appeal to both younger and older non-working groups. The occupation profile is well-distributed, capturing viewpoints from business owners, professionals, homemakers, students, and retirees.

Table 5: Monthly Income

Income Group	%
>2,00,000	20%
1,00,000-2,00,000	19%
25,000-49,999	16%
50,000-99,999	16%
Prefer not to say	15%
<25,000	14%

(**Source:** Primary Data)

The sample represents a diverse range of income levels. High income groups: >2,00,000 (20%) and 1,00,000-2,00,000 (19%) → combined 39%. This indicates a strong presence of affluent respondents, who may have greater purchasing power and access to omnichannel facilities. Middle-income groups (25,000-99,999) collectively represent 32%. Low-income (<25,000) individuals make up 14% of the population. 15% chose not to disclose their income, indicating that respondents are privacy-conscious. The data reflect a financially diverse sample, slightly skewed toward high-income consumers.

Table 6: City Type

City Type	%
Tier-III / Town / Rural	32%
Metro	25%
Tier-II city	22%
Tier-I city	21%

(**Source:** Primary Data)

The largest group is Tier III/Rural (32%), indicating strong participation from non-metro regions. Metros (25%) and Tier-II cities (22%) have nearly equal representation. Tier-I cities (21%) form the smallest group among urban categories. Omnichannel retail usage is widespread beyond metros, with Tier-III consumers forming a significant portion, implying growing digital exposure and retail access

in semi-urban/rural areas.

Table 7: Multi-Channel Shopping Frequency

Frequency	%
Often	22%
Rarely	21%
Sometimes	21%
Always	20%
Never	16%

A large majority (84%) have used multi-channel shopping at some frequency. 22% of shoppers often shop and 20% always shop, indicating strong adoption of omnichannel behaviour. Only 16% have never used a multichannel approach, suggesting high user awareness. Balanced responses indicate varied usage patterns, showing that some users regularly utilise multi-channel retail. Others do so occasionally or rarely. Multi-channel shopping is a widely accepted behaviour, with most respondents having at least some experience in omnichannel environments.

Regression Analysis: Interpretation

This multiple regression analysis was conducted to identify how various factors of omnichannel retailing predict Purchase Intention among consumers.

The dependent variable (DV): Purchase Intention

Independent variables (IVs): Perceived Channel Integration, Perceived Convenience, Information Consistency, Personalisation, Service Quality, Trust and Price Value

Model Summary

- $R^2 = 0.17$
- Adjusted $R^2 = 0.107$
- n = 100

This indicates that the predictor variables collectively explain 17% of the variance in Purchase Intention. Although modest, this suggests that the selected omnichannel constructs have some predictive power; however, other external factors may also influence purchase intention.

Interpretation of Coefficients

Predictor	Coefficient	t-Stat	Interpretation
Perceived Channel Integration	-0.1199	-1.349	Not significant; weak negative effect
Perceived Convenience	-0.0604	-0.621	Not significant; weak negative effect
Information Consistency	-0.2243	-2.521	Significant; negative effect
Personalization	0.0725	1.095	Not significant; weak positive effect
Service Quality	0.2008	2.746	Significant; positive effect
Trust	-0.0055	-0.071	Not significant
Price Value	-0.068	-0.834	Not significant
Constant	4.3807	6.081	Baseline purchase intention is high

Key Findings

1) Service Quality → Significant Positive Predictor

- **β = 0.2008, t = 2.746**
- Indicates that better service quality (e.g., helpful staff, efficient return process, responsiveness) leads to **increased purchase intention**.
- This suggests that consumers value quality interactions more than just channel consistency or pricing.

Better service delivery in omnichannel settings increases customers' willingness to buy.

2) Information Consistency → Significant Negative Predictor

- **β = -0.2243, t = -2.521**
- Surprisingly, information consistency across channels decreases purchase intention.

It can be concluded that consumers may tolerate inconsistency because convenience, service, or offers outweigh the need for perfect information. Inconsistent information may be expected when switching channels (online vs. in-store), so they do not penalize retailers strongly. It is also clear that consumers may perceive overly consistent information as a lack of differentiation between channels. Higher information consistency does not guarantee higher purchase intention; it may even decrease it.

3) Other Predictors → Not Significant

Variables: Perceived Channel Integration, Convenience, Personalization, Trust, Price Value

These variables have a minimal influence on consumers' purchase intentions in this dataset. While conceptually important, these factors may not significantly affect purchase behaviour for omnichannel customers in this sample, or their effect may be overshadowed by service quality.

Constant: The constant term (4.38, t = 6.08) indicates a strong, positive baseline purchase intention even when predictors are absent. This suggests respondents generally have good interest in shopping through omnichannel platforms.

Overall Interpretation

The model has modest predictive power ($R^2 = 0.17$).

Only two constructs significantly influence purchase intention:

Service Quality (+)

Information Consistency (-)

Among them, Service Quality is the strongest positive predictor, reinforcing the importance of improved customer support and seamless service. Meanwhile, the negative influence of Information Consistency suggests that ensuring perfect data uniformity across channels may not drive purchase intention.

The regression model shows that Service Quality is the most important positive driver of purchase intention in omnichannel retailing. Unexpectedly, Information Consistency has a significant adverse effect, suggesting consumers may overlook inaccuracies as long as service experiences are intense. Other factors—including convenience, channel integration, personalisation, trust, and price value do not significantly affect purchase intention in this sample.

Managerial Implications

1. **Strengthening Service Operations is Critical:** Given its significant positive impact, service quality should be

regarded as a strategic priority. Retailers must enhance support systems across all channels by employing trained personnel, offering reliable after-sales service, and managing returns efficiently to boost consumer purchase intention.

2. **Reconsider Emphasis on Information Uniformity:** The negative relationship between information consistency and purchase intention indicates that perfect cross-channel information alignment might not be necessary. Retailers should allocate investments carefully; ensuring functional accuracy is crucial, but extra efforts for complete uniformity may not significantly boost consumer intention.
3. **Position Personalization as a Complementary Strategy:** Although personalization showed a positive, non-significant influence, it may still enhance differentiated experiences. Retailers should use personalization to support not replace service quality improvements.
4. **Channel Integration and Convenience Should Not Be Over-Prioritised:** Despite their theoretical relevance, these dimensions were not significant predictors. Retailers should ensure that integration and convenience remain effective, but avoid diverting resources away from high-impact areas, such as service excellence.
5. **Emerging Market Opportunity in Tier-III Regions:** With a significant respondent share from Tier-III locations, the findings indicate increasing omnichannel engagement in smaller towns. Retailers should expand into these markets by improving last-mile delivery, forming local partnerships, and offering customised services.
6. **Adopt a holistic omnichannel strategy:** Since no single functional aspect, except service quality, strongly predicts purchase intention, retailers must develop an integrated approach that collectively improves the overall customer experience.

1.8 Future Research Directions

1. **Incorporate Additional Cognitive and Affective Variables:** Given the modest model fit, future studies should include constructs such as perceived value, customer satisfaction, brand trust, and switching cost to better explain purchase intention.
2. **Examine mediating and moderating mechanisms:** The interaction among omnichannel dimensions requires further investigation. Future studies should test mediators (e.g., satisfaction, perceived risk) and moderators (e.g., digital literacy, channel familiarity, age cohort).
3. **Qualitative Inquiry into Information Consistency:** The unexpected negative relationship between information consistency and purchase intention calls for exploratory research. In-depth interviews might uncover whether consumers link strict uniformity to less flexibility, perceived opportunism, or a lack of differentiation.
4. **Industry-Level Comparison:** Since omnichannel maturity varies across sectors, comparing fashion, grocery, consumer electronics, and service-based industries would improve generalisability.
5. **Longitudinal Designs:** Longitudinal research can evaluate whether the significance of omnichannel determinants changes as consumers become more experienced or as technology progresses.
6. **Advanced Scale Development:** The low internal consistency of several constructs indicates the need for refined measurement tools. Future research should use confirmatory factor analysis or item response theory to improve construct validity.
7. **Integration of Behavioural Data:** Incorporating transactional or clickstream data could reduce self-report bias and provide stronger validity regarding the link between perceptions and behaviour.

Conclusion

This study examined the impact of multiple omnichannel marketing dimensions on consumers' purchase intentions. Although the overall model demonstrated modest explanatory power ($R^2 = 0.17$), the findings provide meaningful insights into consumer behaviour in an evolving retail environment. Among the examined predictors, Service Quality emerged as the only significant positive determinant of purchase intention, underscoring the centrality of seamless support, transaction transparency, and customer assistance within omnichannel contexts.

Interestingly, Information Consistency exerted a significant negative influence on purchase intention. This counterintuitive relationship suggests that strict uniformity in pricing or product information across channels may not be a primary driver of consumers' purchasing decisions. Instead, consumers might prioritise value-enhancing aspects such as timely service, responsiveness, and convenience, even if informational discrepancies exist. Other constructs including Perceived Convenience, Channel Integration, Personalization, Trust, and Price Value did not exhibit statistically significant effects.

Taken together, the findings highlight that while technology-enabled channel integration contributes to the retail ecosystem, the strength of the customer-service interface remains paramount. Omnichannel retailing strategies must therefore move beyond functional harmonisation and emphasise experience-based value creation.

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