

Original Research Article

Role of Omni Channel Attributes and Perceived Behavioral Control in Omni Channel Selection

ABSTRACT

The retailing industry is worldwide transitioning from multi-channel retailing to omni channel retailing. In contrast to multi-channel retailing which provides offerings through different and separate channels, in an omni channel retailing context all channels are well integrated for providing seamless channel experience to its customers. The transition from multi-channel to omni channel retailing can be seen in growing eminence in Saudi Arabia. Managing channels synergistically for providing seamless customer experience is proving out to be challenging task for omni channel retailers. For understanding of how omni channel retailers can better integrate and coordinate their channels it's paramount to first understand the behavior of omni channel shoppers. However, what omni channel attributes are valued necessary by consumers in making them seamlessly choose omni channels repeatedly for their purchases are not explicit in the literature especially in Saudi Arabian context. This study aims to examine the important omni channel attributes namely omni channel transparency, convenience and uniformity that influence consumer's perception in selecting omni channels using theory of planned behavior. The study sample comprised of 551 respondents who actively shopped from Saudi omni channel retailers. Structural equation modelling was employed to test all hypothesized relationships of the study. The study results revealed significant positive relationships between omni channel transparency, convenience and uniformity and perceived behavioral control. The study also reported significant positive relationship of perceived behavioral control with omni channel selection. The study found that omni channel attributes help positively in enhancing consumer's perception of ease in the ability of selecting omni channels for shopping. Some limitations and future research directions are also discussed in the study.

Keywords: omni-channel attributes, omni-channel transparency, omni-channel convenience, omni-channel uniformity, perceived behavioral control, omni-channel selection

1.INTRODUCTION

Globally the ecommerce market is seen steadily growing from 9.09 trillion US dollars in 2019 to 16.27 trillion US dollars in 2023 [43]. The global growth rate from ecommerce market is projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 15%[43]. Within the global ecommerce market one such impeccably fastest growingecommerce market is seen in the middle eastern country of Saudi Arabia[37]. The total worth of ecommerce market in Saudi Arabia in the middle east region was estimated at 10.6 billion US dollars for the year 2023[37].The Saudi Arabian ecommerce market growth rate stands highest in the middle east regionand is predicted to grow every year CAGR of 20.87%[43]. Saudi Arabia hosts a young and tech savvy population[51].More than 98% of the Saudi population enjoy the internet access making Saudi Arabia stand out as a key player in ecommerce market in middle east region[51]. Saudi Arabian consumers are increasingly seen embracing ecommerce as almost more than 90% of Saudi's

have at least shopped online once in 2022 for clothing, electronics, furniture, food and personal care products[37]. With the advent of ecommerce success worldwide retailers first adopted multi-channel approach by providing more than one channel for selling with a division between physical and online channels[18, 33]. But later multi-channel retailers found this approach difficult in providing satisfactory customer experience because of disintegrated supply chains [19, 62]. Several scholars [6,57,52,58] have proposed that retailing industry is transitioning from multi-channel retailing to omni channel retailing. In contrast to multi-channel retailing which provides offerings through different and separate channels, in an omni channel retailing context all channels are well integrated and provide seamless channel experience to consumers [47,49]. Consumers adopting omni channel approach move across channels seamlessly for example, they might get the information from mobile app, order on the website and pick up the product later from the store or vice versa[33,49]. However, managing channels synergistically for providing seamless customer experience has proved out to be a challenging task for omni channel retailers[4,47]. The retail supply chains of omni channel retailers differ significantly from traditional retailers[9]. Omni channel retailing calls for supply chains to be flexible and agile in their ability to fulfill customer orders efficiently and effectively in different number of ways [62,9]. Understanding of how omni channel retailers can integrate and coordinate their channels be it physical store, retailing website, mobile applications synergistically is very important for retailers to remain sustainable, relevant and profitable in the market [13,42,49]. Growing trends of online sales is pressing retailers of Saudi Arabia to maintain their presence seamlessly online as well as offline, with their presence spanning across physical stores, websites and smartphone applications[54]. The transition from multi-channel to omni channel retailing is seen in growing eminence among major Saudi Arabian retailers[54]. Numerous scholars [13,33,50,55] have suggested that it's important to first understand the behavior of omni channel shoppers to better understand their needs. So that retailers can accordingly integrate their channels and coordinate their supply chains for providing best seamless customer experiences. However, what omni channel attributes are valued necessary by consumers which makes them seamlessly choose omni channels repeatedly for their purchases are not explicit in the literature especially in Saudi Arabian context. This study aims to study in-depth the important omni channel attributes that influence consumer's perception in selecting omni channels. This study thus seeks to explain the behavior of omni channel consumers by understanding the link between omni channel attributes and omni channel selection with the help of theory of planned behavior.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Omni Channel Attributes

Omni channel retailing is referred to as selling of merchandise through well integrated widespread channels which are controlled by retailers in which consumers seamlessly interact across channels[6,25]. Omni channel retailers are typically characterized by the seamless way they provide their marketing channels for shopping to consumers like "buying online and then collecting from the store" or "buying online with home delivery" or "buy in store with home delivery" [20,25]. Omni channel retailing is considered as an evolution from multi-channel retailing [56,57,25]. Numerous scholars [26,10,52] are of the opinion that the retailing transitioned before from cross channels to multi-channels and now it is seen transitioning into omni channel retailing from multi-channel retailing with new challenges. For example, several studies [36,7,41] have been conducted on challenges faced by omni channel retailers in distribution and inventory management. However, majority of scholars [48,24,55,9] have suggested that to tackle new challenges faced by omni channel retailers the understanding of the consumer channel behavior first is very important. Omni channel consumers shop seamlessly across various channels provided by omni channel retailers[49]. For example, they might get information from mobile app about a product then order it on website and collect from the store or visit the store for information and later buy online from the same retailer's website with home delivery[49]. Several studies [38,20,59] have suggested for understanding of the omni channel shopper behavior it is paramount to highlight and examine first the key omni channel attributes which makes consumers use omni channels. Omni channels possess three

core channel attributes namely omni channel transparency, omni channel convenience and omni channel uniformity[61,39,38]. Omni Channel transparency refers of how much information the retailers make available for customers, like order status, inventory visibility and ease of tracking orders etc. in an omni channel[61,38]. Omni Channel convenience refers to the time and effort saved when shopping from omni channels[61,38]. OmniChannel uniformity refers to consistency provided by the omni channel retailer across all channels in fulfilling orders and providing post purchase assistance through all channels [61,38]. Several scholars [61,20,59,38] have called for studies that would help in explaining the link between omni channel attributes and omni channel selection of omni shoppers. This study aims to explain this link by employing consumer's perceived behavioral control from theory of planned behavior in understanding how omni channel attributes like omni channel transparency, omni channel convenience and omni channel uniformity lead to omni channel selection among consumers for their purchases.

2.2 Perceived Behavioral Control

This study employs consumer's perceived behavioral control from theory of planned behavior [2] for explaining and predicting the behavior of omni channel consumers. The theory of planned behavior is basically an extension of theory of reasoned Action [1] which suggests mere intention alone is not enough to predict actual behavior. The presence or absence of requisite resources and opportunities also matters in turning of intention into actual behavior [2]. Perceived behavioral control is referred to "the person's belief as to how easy or difficult performance of the behavior is likely to be" Ajzen and Madden [2, p.457]. In simple words ease or difficulty perceived by an individual in performing an action [3]. In omni channels context the perceived behavioral control can be referred to the consumers belief of how easy or difficult it is to buy, select and ability to choose omni channels [61]. Xu and Jackson [61] suggests the ease or difficulty in availability and absence of hindrances in choosing can also be accounted as perceived behavioral control of consumers in omnichannel context. In the study context perceived behavior control will thus be therefore referred to how easy or difficult omnichannel consumer perceives in purchasing things from omni channel retailers. Since omni channel retailing being relatively newer concept than other concepts in marketing channels literature. Very few studies are seen that have examined the effect of omnichannel attributes on perceived behavior control and its respective consequence on omni channel selection. Therefore, this study will deeply examine what omni channel attributes affect consumer's perception of ease or difficulty in selecting omni channels.

2.3 Omni channel selection

Omni channel selection is referred to as the intention of consumers in selecting omni channels for their future purchases[12]. Several studies [29,48,53] have found that intention to select marketing channels as most important predictor for consumer purchases. There are a number of studies [11,32] who have validated that intention indeed leads to action. In marketing channels context several studies [44,23] have found that customers who have purchase intention for a certain product also have intention to purchase them from certain channels. For example, in a study conducted by Roa et al. [44] in US, it was found that consumers preferred purchasing through physical stores rather than online for retailers who suffered with operational glitches like delays and failure to fulfill orders in their online channels. Several scholars [12,21] have suggested the intention to select omni channels for future purchases is highlighted when consumers happily consent to choose omni channels for future purchases and keep omni channels as their first option for shopping. Other scholars [61,20] have also suggested that the intention of consumers for selecting omnichannels gets also reflected when consumers try to encourage and recommend using omni channels for shopping to others like family and friends. In an omni channel retailing context it's not only important for retailers to understand customer perception but also be able to predict which channel the customer would likely select to purchase for managing their channels and supply chains [60,47]. This study thus with the help of theory of planned behavior aims to understand how consumers intend to select omni channels for making purchases through omni channel retailers.

3. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

3.1 Omni channel transparency and Perceived behavioral control

Omni channel transparency refers to the level of information made available by retailers for customers, especially order status in a given channel [38]. Previous studies [40,22,45] have revealed that channel transparency is greatly valued by customers of both physical store and online retailers. Verhoef et al. [57] suggests that it's important that omni channels are transparent and the customers are made aware and familiar with the information about their products. Several studies [54,9,45] have reported inventory visibility and ease of tracking orders from purchase to delivery as important factors for omni channel to be transparent. For example, in one study conducted in US by Ren et al. [45] it was found that adding transparency in omni channels greatly reduced lost online sales. They found making processes completely transparent in omni channels helps consumers in avoiding uncertainty and in shaping of clear expectations from omni channels. The authors concluded that channel transparency also helps consumers in evaluating the performance of omni channel retailers. In a study conducted in US by Chen and Chi [12] on apparel omni channel retailing reported positive relationship between channel transparency and perceived behavioral control. They found consumers access to complete information across all channels in omni channel retailing context positively influences consumer's perception of ease or difficulty in ability to make purchases from omni channel retailers. In the study context it can be said that more the omni channels are transparent the more will be the perceived behavioral control of Saudi omnichannel shoppers. It is thus, hypothesized:

H1: There is a positive relationship between omni channel transparency and perceived behavioral control.

3.2 Omni channel convenience and Perceived behavioral control

Omni channel convenience refers to the time and effort saved of consumers when purchasing from omni channel retailers [38]. In a study conducted on convenience of home deliveries by online grocery retailers by Bhatia [8], the author found customers were primarily driven for online purchases because of the ease in convenience of delivering groceries at house doorsteps. Several studies [61,12] have reported omni channel convenience is greatly valued by consumers because of harnessing savings in time and effort. These studies have also found that omni channel convenience like saving of time and energy, free shipping and prompt deliveries stimulates customer's perception of ease and satisfaction. For example, in a study conducted on fashion omni channel retailing in the US by Chen and Chi [12], the authors found consumers greatly valued shopping through omni channel retailers because of ease in searching, choosing and purchasing anytime anywhere with quick deliveries provided. In another study conducted by Ma [35] in US on omni channel retailing it was reported that the satisfaction of omni channel consumers is largely driven by free shipping and shorter periods of delivery time. Xu and Jackson [61] in a study conducted in UK on omni channel retailing found the ease in searching, selecting and buying with hassle free delivery process through any channel anytime makes omni channels attractive to consumers. Xu and Jackson [61] suggest this ease provided in buying through omnichannels combined with ease in familiarity and easy access enhances consumer's perceived behavioral control. Xu and Jackson [61] reported positive relationship between omni channel convenience and perceived behavioral control in their study. Based on the above body of literature, it can be said the more the omni channels are convenient the more the Saudi consumers will have perceived behavioral control. So, it is thus hypothesized;

H2: There is a positive relationship between omni channel convenience and perceived behavioral control.

3.3 Omni channel uniformity and Perceived behavioral control

Omni channel uniformity refers to consistency across all marketing channels in fulfilling orders and providing assistance [60,37]. Omni channel uniformity is also reflected when retailer and fulfiller of orders made online are the same [38]. Costa et al. [14] suggest that when the seller and fulfiller of the orders are the same instead of third-party logistics provider, customer's perception is stimulated as they perceive consistency in service quality in shopping stages. Chen & Chi [12] in a study conducted in US on omni channel retailers found maintaining uniformity across marketing channels greatly enhanced perceived behavioral control among US consumers. In another study on omni channel retailing conducted in UK by Xu and Jackson [61], it was reported that uniformity of omni channels in terms fulfilling orders, providing of post purchase assistance and delivering of online orders by omni channel retailers themselves positively affected consumer's perceived behavioral control. The authors reported positive relationship of omni channel uniformity and perceived behavioral control in their study. In the study context it can be said, the more the Saudi omni channel retailers maintain uniformity in providing assistance, fulfillment and delivery of all kinds of orders across all channels the more will be the perceived behavioral control among Saudi consumers. So, it is thus hypothesized;

H3: There is a positive relationship between channel uniformity and perceived behavioral control.

3.4 Perceived Behavior Control and Omni Channel Selection

It's important for retailers to understand consumer's perception of how they select omni channels for shopping so that omni channel retailers better manage their channels and supply chains [60]. Theory of planned behavior postulates that the perceived behavioral control influences an individual's perception to perform a certain behavior which the individual easily perceives capable of performing [2,3]. In a study conducted in Portugal on omni shopper's perception by Silva et al. [50] it was found that perceived ease of usefulness influences purchase intention among customers who shop using omnichannel approach. In the context of marketing channels many studies [31,23,61] have found that customers who have purchase intention for a certain product also have intention to purchase them from certain channels. For example, Konus et al. [31] found in his study on multi-channel retailers found that when customers perceive enhanced ease of using marketing channels, they also develop an intention to select the channel again for shopping. In an omni channel retailing context, Chen & Chi [12] also found in their study when consumers perceive ease in shopping through omni channels they also develop an intention of selecting the omni channels again in future for shopping. Chen & Chi [12] reported positive relationship between perceived behavioral control of consumers and omni channel selection in their study. In the study context it can be said, when consumers of Saudi omni channel retailers experience enhanced perceived behavioral control they will also positively develop an intention to select the omni channel again for shopping. It is thus hypothesized;

H4: There is a positive relationship between perceived behavioral control and omni channel selection.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Population and Sampling Method

The population for this study consists of all consumers who shop through omni channel retailers of Saudi Arabia. The sample consisted of 551 consumers from three different regions of Saudi Arabia namely; Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam who shop through Saudi Arabian omni channel retailers. The study adopted non probability sampling method; namely snowball sampling method. The reason for employing snowball sampling method was to net as many target respondents as possible from different regions of Saudi Arabia. The sample was collected both through online and personal interview method outside supermarkets, electronic retailers, pharmacies and furniture stores who mimic omni channel retailers.

The respondents were encouraged to forward the online version of the questionnaire to other fellow consumers who like themselves shop through omni channel retailers of Saudi Arabia.

4.2 Measurement and Research Instrument

The questionnaire of this study begins with the filter question prompting mandatory selection for one of the three options “Buy online and pick up from store”, “Buy online with home delivery” and “Buy in store and home delivery”. The three options in the filter question characterizes marketing channels of omni channel retailers. Only after affirmative selection of any of these three options the respondents are allowed to proceed to answer the major items of the study. The respondents are then asked what do they mostly buy and how often do they buy from omni channel retailers followed by some demographic variables. All measures related to the main constructs of the study are measured using 5-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”. The scales for measuring the main constructs of the study are adopted from prior studies and adapted to the study context. For example, the measures for constructs of omni channel transparency, omni channel convenience and omni channel uniformity are adopted and adapted to the study context from the studies of Xu & Jackson [61] and Neslin [38]. Similarly, for the construct of perceived behavioral control the measures are adopted and adapted to the study context from the study of Ajzen [3]. Lastly, for the construct of omnichannel selection the measures are adopted from the study of Chen & Chi [12] and adapted to the study context.

4.3 Procedure

The study employs both Spss and Mplus statistical software for analysis and hypotheses testing. The procedure for the study commences with reporting of sample characteristics and descriptive statistics of the study using SPSS. Thereafter, the reliability and validity of the constructs of the study are thoroughly assessed using SPSS statistical software. The reliability of the items is assessed by inspection of Cronbach alpha for the items measuring each construct. As suggested by DeVillis [15] and Kline [30] only Cronbach alpha of greater than “.7” is accepted for confirming assurance of reliability of measures. The construct validity is thereafter inspected through assessment of convergent and discriminant validity. The presence of convergent validity is assessed through inspection of the values of average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR) [17]. Which as suggested by Fornell & Larcker [17] should be above .5 and .6 respectively for confirming the presence of convergent validity. After assurance of convergent validity, the presence of discriminant validity is assessed by inspecting the values of square root of AVE against the inter correlation values of the constructs for the study [27]. For confirming presence of discriminant validity, John & Benet-Martinez [27] suggests that the square root of AVE should stand greater than the correlations of other constructs. Thus, after assurance of reliability and validity. The study proceeds for testing the hypotheses of the study by employing structural equation modeling (SEM) technique using Mplus statistical software. However, before proceeding with SEM it is necessary to first ensure model fit which means inspection of how well the data fits the study’s model [16]. The presence or absence of the model fit is assessed through inspection of goodness of fit indices like Chi square, CFI, RMSEA, SRMR [16]. The presence of model fit is assured when Chi square is insignificant, CFI >.9, RMSEA <.08 and SRMR <.05 [16]. Thus, after assurance of model fit SEM is employed to test all hypotheses of the study which shall be followed by reporting of results.

5. FINDINGS

5.1 Sample Characteristics

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
What do you mostly buy from omni channel retailers			
Electronics	166	30.1	30.1
Clothing	116	21.1	51.2
Food and Groceries	107	19.4	70.6
Medicine and Personal Care	28	5.1	75.7
Furniture and Household Items	67	12.2	87.9
Others	15	2.7	90.6
All of the above	52	9.4	100.0
How often do you shop from omni channel retailers			
Very often	156	28.3	28.3
More often	201	36.5	64.8
Often	131	23.8	88.6
Less often	63	11.4	100.0
Age			
Less than 20	68	12.3	12.3
21-30	158	28.7	41.0
31-40	235	42.6	83.6
More than 41	90	16.4	100.0
Gender			
Male	433	78.6	78.6
Female	118	21.4	100.0
Are you employed?			
Yes	468	84.9	84.9
No	83	15.1	100.0
Monthly Income in Saudi Arabian Riyal (SAR)			
Less than 5000	67	12.2	12.2
5000-15000	132	23.9	36.1
15000-25000	256	46.5	82.6
More than 25000	96	17.4	100

All the 551 respondents affirmatively responded to the filter question of using omni channels in their shopping. Out of the 551 respondents, 30.1% of them mostly purchased electronics, 21.1% mostly purchased clothing, 19.4% mostly purchased foods and groceries, 12.2% purchased furniture and household items, 9.4% mostly purchased in the all of the mentioned categories, 5.1% purchased medicine and personal care items and 2.7% purchased other items through respective omni channel retailers. With regards to how often respondents shop from omni channel retailers, 36.5% of the total respondents said they shop more often, 28.3% said they shop very often, 23.8% said they shop often and 11.4% of the total respondents confessed to shopping less often from omni channel retailers. Majority of the respondents of the study fell in the age group of "31-40" years (42.6%), followed by the age group of "21-30" years (28.7%), "more than 41" years (16.4%) and age group of "less than 20" years of age (12.3%). The study sample comprised mostly of males (78.6%) than females (21.4%). 84.9% of the total respondents marked employed while as 15.1% of the total respondents marked unemployed as their employment status in the study sample. Most of the respondents in the study sample fell in the income range of "15000-25000" SAR (46.5%), followed by income range of "5000-15000" SAR (23.9%), "more than 25000" SAR (17.4%) and "less than 5000" SAR (12.2%).

5.2 Descriptive Statistics

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.deviation
Omni Channel Transparency	5511.00		5.00	3.74	1.27
Omni Channel Convenience	5511.00		5.00	3.98	1.26
Omni Channel Uniformity	5511.00		5.00	3.81	1.31
Perceived Behavioral Control	5511.00		5.00	4.31	1.88
Omni Channel Selection	5511.00		5.00	4.11	1.61

Table 2 reports the descriptive statistics of the study. The responses for the main constructs of the study were captured on a Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Strongly Disagree was coded as “1”, Disagree as “2”, Neutral as “3”, Agree as “4” and Strongly Agree as “5”. As can be seen from Table 2 the mean value for the construct omni channel transparency is “3.74”. the mean value of “3.74” denotes that the respondents are leaning towards the agree side implying omni channels are perceived to have transparency among respondents. For the construct of omni channel convenience the mean value of “3.98” implies respondents mostly agree that they find omni channel as convenient. The mean value of “3.81” for the construct of omni channel uniformity denotes most of the respondents somewhat agree that omni channels reflect uniformity. For the construct of Perceived Behavioral Control, the mean value of “4.31” implies that respondents agree more in having ease in selecting omni channels for purchasing through omni channel retailers. Lastly, the mean value of “4.11” for the construct of omni channel selection clearly indicates that respondents mostly agree on holding intentions to purchase from omni channels repeatedly in future.

5.3 Reliability and Validity

The reliability refers to the internal consistency of the measures in measuring a construct [15,30]. The reliability of the measures is assured with the help of inspection of Cronbach alpha value for the measures measuring the construct [15,30]. The minimum acceptable Cronbach alpha value which assures reliability of measures is “.70” [15,30]. Table 4 reports the respective Cronbach alpha values of the measures used for measuring main constructs of the study. As can be clearly inferred from Table 4 all Cronbach alpha values are well above the acceptable Cronbach alpha value of “.70”, hence reliability of the measures used for this study is said to be assured. The validity of the constructs is assured through the presence of convergent and discriminant validity[5]. The presence or absence of convergent validity is determined through the inspection of average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR) values[17]. The minimum threshold values for AVE and CR values should be above “.50” and “.60” for ensuring presence of convergent validity[17]. However, for obtaining the AVE and CR values the obtainment of standardized factor loadings is necessary[17]. For obtaining the standardized factor loadings the sample data should reflect sample adequacy for factor analysis[28,17]. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity help in inspecting whether the sample data is adequate for factor analysis or not[28]. For assurance of suitability of the sample data for factor analysis the

Table3.KMOandBartlett'stest

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.801
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3841.291
	Df	120
	Sig.	.000

minimum acceptable value for KMO is “.70” with a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity [28].

Table 3 reports the overall KMO and Bartlett's test of the study and as evident the KMO value is above .70 (.80>.70) with a significant Bartlett's test of Sphericity ($p < .05$). The individual KMO for all the five constructs of the study were also seen above “.70” with significant Bartlett's tests of sphericity. Thus, indicating that the data sample of the study is adequate for factor analysis.

Table 4. Standardized factor loadings, Cronbach alpha, AVE & CR

Constructs	Items	Factor loadings	AVE	CR
Omni channel transparency Alpha(.78)	The order statusof the products is always clear when using this channel.	.84	.67	.89
	The inventory information of products is clearly visible when using this channel.	.77		
	The complete product information is easily available using this channel.	.87		
	Tracking orders are easy when using this channel.	.81		
Omni ChannelConvenience Alpha (.81)	I can shop anytime using this channel	.78	.63	.87
	I can shop from anywhere using this channel	.83		
	It takes less time and efforts to purchase when using this channel.	.81		
	It is easy tolearn about products while shopping using this channel.	.76		
Omni Channel Uniformity Alpha (.82)	There is no difference in order fulfillment across all channels	.84	.65	.88
	There is no difference in post purchase assistance across all channels	.81		
	The retailer is also the deliverer of products.	.80		
	The purchase transactions are secure and easy across all channels	.79		
Perceived behavioral control Alpha(.77)	It is easy for me to shop using this channel	.80	.64	.87
	I can shop easily whenever I wantusing this channel	.79		
	I perceive very much control over my ability in choosing this channel for shopping.	.78		
	There are no external factors which prevent me to shop through this channel.	.83		
Omni channel selection Alpha (.83)	I will choose this channel in my future shopping.	.78	.67	.89
	I would like to encourage my family and friends in using this channel to shop.	.81		
	I recommend others to choose this channel for shopping.	.83		
	This channel comes as the first option in mind to buy from whenever I think of buying in future	.85		

The standardized factor loadings of items being above “.30” indicates the items are loading nicely onto their respective constructs [16]. Table 4 reports the standardized factor loadings for all measures of the study above “.30” which indicates the measures of the study are nicely weighing upon the constructs of the study. In Table 4 it can be clearly seen the AVE and CR values for all constructs of the study are seen

to be well above the acceptable values of “.50” and “.60”. Thus, indicating clear presence of convergent validity. For complete assurance of construct validity, the presence of discriminant validity alongside convergent validity is also important [27]. The presence of discriminant validity is ensured when the individual correlations of the constructs appear less than square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) values [27]. Table 5 presents the individual correlations of the constructs of the study with square root of AVE values presented diagonally in bold letters. As evident from Table 5 all the individual correlations values of the constructs are seen less than the square root of AVE values both across rows and columns. Thus, assuring presence of discriminant validity. The constructs of the study are thus said to be both reliable and valid.

Table 5. Discriminant validity

Constructs	1	2	3	4	5
1.Omni Channel Transparency	.82				
2.Omni Channel Convenience	.314	.79			
3.Omni Channel Uniformity	.287	.368	.81		
4.Perceived Behavioral Control	.325	.219	.411	.80	
5.Omni Channel Selection	.298	.240	.347	.267	.82

6. RESULTS

For testing the hypotheses of the study using structural equation modelling (SEM) the affirmation of good model fit is necessary. Model fit refers to how well the data fits the model structure and is inspected through goodness of fit indices. For assurance of a tenable model fit the goodness of fit indices like chi square (χ^2) should be insignificant ($p > .05$), confirmatory fit index (CFI) $> .9$, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) $< .08$ and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) $< .05$ [16]. Table 6 reports goodness of fit indices for the study's model. As evident from Table 6 chi square (χ^2) is seen insignificant ($p = .25$), CFI $> .9$ ($.92 > .9$), RMSEA $< .08$ ($.068 < .08$) and SRMR $< .05$ ($.034 < .05$) indicates the presence of good model fit. Thus, hypotheses of the study can now be tested using SEM.

Table 6 Goodness of Fit Indices

CFI model	Chi-square χ^2	Df	CFI	SRMR	RMSEA	90% CI for RMSEA	
						LL	UL
Model	416.82 (<i>p value = .25</i>)	408	.92	.034	.068	.058	.075

Table 7 presents the structural model results of the study. As reported from Table 7 there is a statistically significant positive relationship seen between omni channel transparency and perceived behavioral control ($\beta = .381$, $p < .001$) supporting hypothesis H1. Table 7 also reports statistically significant positive relationship between omni channel convenience and perceived behavioral control ($\beta = .413$, $p < .001$). Thus, hypothesis H2 is supported. From Table 7 it can also be seen a statistically significant positive relationship between omni channel uniformity and perceived behavioral control ($\beta = .369$, $p < .001$). Thus, supporting hypothesis H3. As evident from Table 7 a statistically significant positive relationship between perceived behavioral control and omni channel selection ($\beta = .538$, $p < .001$) is seen. Thus, hypothesis H4 stands supported.

Table 7. Structural path estimates

Path	Estimate	S.E.	P-Value
Omni Channel Transparency → Perceived Behavioral Control	.381	.098	0.000
Omni Channel Convenience → Perceived Behavioral Control	.413	.152	0.000

Omni Channel Uniformity → Perceived Behavioral Control	.369	.114	0.000
Perceived Behavioral Control → Omni Channel Selection	.538	.172	0.000

7. DISCUSSION

The results of the study reported significant positive relationship between omni channel transparency and perceived behavioral control. The results are in line with previous studies [12,55] that have reported significant positive relationships between omni channel transparency and perceived behavioral control. In omni channel retailing context access to complete information across all channels for consumers is seen positively influencing their perception of ease in ability of making purchases through omni channels. The study also reported significant positive relationship between omni channel convenience and perceived behavioral control. The results are in agreement with the study of Xu & Jackson [61] which previously has reported significant positive relationships between omni channel convenience and perceived behavioral control. The ease in searching, selecting and hassle-free buying process of products through omni channels enhances consumer's perceived behavioral control. So, in this study it can be inferred from the results omni channel convenience is valued by Saudi consumers. Significant positive relationship was reported between omni channel uniformity and perceived behavioral control in this study. The results are in complete agreement with prior study of Xu & Jackson [61] that reported significant positive relationships between omni channel uniformity and perceived behavioral control. The consistency in terms of fulfilling orders, providing of post purchase assistance and delivering of online orders across omni channels is thus seen positively influencing consumer's perceived behavioral control in this study. Lastly, the results revealed a significant positive relationship between perceived behavioral control and omni channel selection. The results are in agreement with prior study of Chen & Chi [12] that has reported significant positive relationships between perceived behavioral control and omni channel selection. In this study it is seen when customers perceive enhanced ease in the ability of using omni channels they also positively develop an intention to select the omni channel again for shopping.

8. CONCLUSION

In conclusion this study tried to combine the consumer's and omni channel retailer's perspective by linking omni channel attributes with omni channel selection through perceived behavioral control. This study revealed the necessary omni channel attributes that influence consumer's perception in seamless choosing of omni channels for their purchases. This study found omni channel transparency, convenience and uniformity as indispensable omni channel attributes in helping understand what makes consumers choose omni channels. These omni channel attributes help in positively enhancing consumer's perception of ease in the ability of selecting omni channels for shopping. This study serves as the founding stone for understanding needs of omni channel shoppers by providing an understanding of their behaviors across omni channels. This understanding can thus help omni channel retailers to better integrate their channels and coordinate their supply chains to the best satisfaction of their consumers.

8.1. Marketing Implications

The study's model can be used across varying omni channel retailing contexts such as electronics, clothing, groceries, furniture etc. However, the most important thing which omni channel retailers need to keep in mind is the important omni channel attributes which positively influence consumers in selecting of omni channels for their shopping. Omni channel retailers need to keep their channels transparent in terms of product information, inventory visibility, order status and ease of tracking orders from purchase

to delivery. Omni channel transparency not only shapes expectations of consumers by allaying uncertainty but also helps consumers in evaluating the performance of omni channel retailers during their initial encounters. Therefore, in order to create a positive impression of ease in ability of making purchases through omni channels their being transparent is paramount. The omni channel retailers also have to make zero compromises when it comes to delivering conveniences to consumers. Operational glitches like failure to fulfill orders and delays can prove detrimental not only to sales but also to future intentions of selecting omni channels. Convenience in omni channels is introduced by providing variety of options for shopping anytime anywhere which help consumers in saving their time and efforts. Besides providing of free and fast deliveries of products also stands among one of the ways of providing conveniences to consumers buying through omni channel retailers. Therefore, omni channel conveniences should be enhanced more and more so that consumer's ease in searching, selecting and buying coupled with hassle free delivery process anytime anywhere makes omni channels more and more attractive for shopping. Omni channel retailers also need to maintain consistency across all marketing channels. Omni channel retailers can enhance their uniformity of channels by fulfilling the orders and providing post purchase assistance through all channels. Omni channel uniformity can also be enhanced by delivering of any online or offline orders by omni channel retailers themselves instead of third-party logistics provider. Maintaining uniformity is very important in omni channels as it not only helps in positive influencing of consumer's perceived behavioral control but also provides indication of consistency in service quality during shopping stages. Thus, making omni channels attractive in the eyes of consumers for shopping again and again.

9. LIMITATIONS OF STUDY AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

This study has couple of limitations. The first limitation of the study is that it rests on the assumption of price parity across all marketing channels provided by omni channel retailers. However, the model cannot explain the shopping behavior and respective selection of omni channels if prices differ across channels. For example, if omni channel retailer offers extra discounts online on products than in physical stores the behavior of consumers might simply skew towards buying only online. So, the study's model suffers a limitation in explaining how price disparity across channels would affect channel integration and behavior of omni shoppers. Future researches can be conducted to examine the effect of price disparity across omni channels on channel integration and consumer interaction. Future researches can also be conducted to investigate whether selection of omnichannels is truly driven through perceived behavioral control or price disparity. Comparison of perceived behavioral control against price disparity across channels can also be conducted in those future researches so that any effects of price disparity in selection of omni channels would come to light. The other limitation of the study is the limitation in generalizability of the results to whole population. The non-probability sampling method employed for collecting the study sample limits the generalizability of results to the study sample itself. Therefore, future researches can employ probability sampling method like cluster sampling method in sample collection so that results can be safely generalized to the population of the study.

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