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

ABSTRACT

The retailing industry worldwide is transitioning from multi-channel retailing to omni channel retailing. In contrast to multi-channel retailing which provides offerings through different and separate channels, all channels are essentially well integrated in omni channel retailing. In the middle eastern region, the transition from multi-channel to omni channel retailing is rapidly taking place in Saudi Arabia. However, managing channels synergistically for providing seamless customer experience is proving out to be challenging task for omni channel retailers. What omni channel attributes are valued necessary by consumers in making them seamlessly choose omni channels for shopping are not explicit in the literature especially in Saudi Arabian context. In order to better integrate and coordinate channels it is very important for omni channel retailers to first understand the behavior of omni channel shoppers. The omni channel retailers need to know what omni channel attributes influence consumer's perception of ease and ability in selecting omni channels for shopping. This study examines how omni channel attributes namely omni channel transparency, omni channel convenience and omni channel uniformity help in influencing consumer's perception in selecting omni channels. The study employed snowball sampling method for collecting the sample of omni shoppers from different regions of Saudi Arabia. The study sample comprised of 551 respondents who actively shopped through various omni channel retailers of Saudi Arabia. All hypothesized relationships of the study were tested simultaneously using structural equation modelling technique. The study reported that omni channel transparency, omni channel convenience and omni channel uniformity positively influence consumer's perception in selecting omni channels in Saudi Arabia. This study tries to combine consumer and omni channel retailer perspectives for the better understanding of shopping behaviors across omni channels. With the better understanding of consumer shopping behaviors, omni channel retailers would be thus able to better integrate their channels and coordinate their supply chains to the best satisfaction of their consumers.

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 further at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 15% [43]. Within the global ecommerce market one such impeccably fastest growing ecommerce 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 region and is predicted to grow every year with a CAGR of 20.87% [43]. Saudi Arabia hosts a young and tech savvy population

[51]. More than 98% of the Saudi population enjoys internet access making Saudi Arabia stand out as a key player in ecommerce market in the middle east region [51]. Saudi Arabian consumers are increasingly being 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 the 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 the disintegration in 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 shopping experience to consumers [47,49]. Consumers adopting omni channel approach move across channels seamlessly [33,49]. For example, they might get the product information from mobile app first, then place the order on website and later pick the product up 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 demands flexible and agile supply chains in order to fulfill customer orders in different number of ways [62, 9]. Understanding of how omni channel retailers can integrate and coordinate their channels be it their physical stores, retailing websites, 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 from physical stores, websites to smartphone applications [54]. The transition from multi-channel to omni channel retailing is rapidly seen growing in Saudi Arabian retail markets [54]. Numerous scholars [13,33,50,55] have suggested that it's important to first understand the behavior of omni channel shoppers for better understanding of their needs so that retailers can accordingly integrate channels and coordinate their supply chains. However, what omni channel attributes are valued necessary by consumers which makes them seamlessly choose omni channels are not explicit in the literature especially in Saudi Arabian context. This study uncovers the important omni channel attributes that influence consumer's perception in selecting omni channels using 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 widespread well integrated channels on which consumers seamlessly shop [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 transitioning from multi-channel retailing into omni channel retailing with new challenges. For example, several studies [36,7,41] have been conducted on the 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 product information from mobile app, then place an order 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 its 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 omni channels [61,38]. Omni Channel convenience refers to the time and effort saved when shopping from omni channels [61,38]. Omni Channel uniformity refers to consistency provided by omni channel retailers in fulfilling orders and providing of post

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purchase assistance in omni 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 thus 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 the 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 the performance of a 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 channel 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 absence of hindrances in choosing omni channels can also be accounted as perceived behavioral control of consumers. In the study context, perceived behavior control will therefore be referred to as how easy or difficult the consumer perceives shopping through omni channel retailers. In marketing channels literature omni channel retailing is relatively newer concept than other concepts. 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 for shopping.

2.3 Omni channel selection

Omni channel selection is referred to as the intention of selecting omni channels by consumers for their future purchases [12]. Several studies [29,48,53] have found intention of selecting marketing channels as important precursor for consumer purchases. There are a number of studies [11,32] who have validated that intention leads to action. In marketing channels context, several studies [44,23] have found that consumers which hold purchase intentions for certain products also hold intentions of buying them from certain 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 their future purchases. Other scholars [61,20] have also suggested that the intention of consumers for selecting omni channels 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, for better management of channels and supply chains it's not only important for retailers to understand customer perception but also be able to predict which channel the customer would likely select for making purchases [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 customers are kept aware of the information about their products. Several studies [54,9,45] have reported inventory visibility and ease of tracking orders as important factors for omni channel transparency. For example, in one study conducted in US by Ren et al. [45] it was found that adding transparency in omni channels greatly reduced online lost sales. They found that making processes transparent in omni channels helps consumers in shaping expectations and avoiding uncertainty. The authors also found that channel

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transparency helps consumers in evaluating the performance of omni channel retailers. In another study conducted in US by Chen and Chi [12] on apparel omni channel retailing, significant positive relationship was reported between omni channel transparency and perceived behavioral control. They found that consumers access to complete information across all channels positively influences consumer's perception of ease and 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 omni channel 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 through omni channel retailers [38]. In a study conducted by Bhatia [8] on convenience of home deliveries by online grocery retailers, the author found customers were primarily driven for online purchases because of the convenience offered by retailers in delivering groceries at doorsteps. Several studies [61,12] have found that omni channel convenience is greatly valued by consumers because of the benefits of saving time and effort. These studies have also found that omni channel convenience like saving of time, efforts, 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], it was found that the consumers greatly valued shopping through omni channel retailers because of the ease in searching, choosing and purchasing anytime anywhere. 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 the ease and convenience of buying through omni channels enhances consumer's perceived behavioral control. Xu and Jackson [61] reported significant 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 omni channels in fulfilling orders and providing assistance [60,37]. Omni channel uniformity is also reflected when the retailer and deliverer of the orders are the same [38]. Costa et al. [14] suggest that when the seller and deliverer of the orders are the same instead of third-party logistics provider consumer's perception of consistency is stimulated. Chen & Chi [12] in a study conducted in US on omni channel retailers found maintaining uniformity across omni channels greatly enhanced perceived behavioral control among US consumers. In another study by Xu and Jackson [61] on omni channel retailing conducted in UK, it was reported that uniformity of omni channels in terms of fulfilment of orders, post purchase assistance and delivering of orders positively affects consumer's perceived behavioral control. The authors reported positive relationship of omni channel uniformity with 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 across omni 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

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It's important for omni channel retailers to understand the consumer's perception of how they select omni channels for shopping so that they can 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 he believes is capable of performing easily [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 that when customers perceive enhanced ease of using a marketing channel, they also develop an intention to select that channel again for shopping. In 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 for future 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 form intentions of selecting omni channels again for shopping. It is thus hypothesized;

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

4. **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. The measures for the 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 omni channel selection the measures are adopted form 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 data 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

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SPSS statistical software. The reliability of the items is assessed by inspection of Cronbach alpha values. As suggested by DeVillis [15] and Kline [30] only Cronbach alpha values of greater than ".7" is accepted for confirming the 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. The presence of discriminant validity is assessed by inspecting the values of the square root of AVE against the individual correlations of the constructs of 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. The presence of the model fit is assessed through inspection of the 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 is followed by reporting of results.

5. FINDINGS

5.1 Sample Characteristics

All of 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 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 marked "more often", 28.3% marked "very often", 23.8% marked "often" and 11.4% of the total respondents marked "less often". Majority of the respondents in the study sample fell in the age group of "31-40" years (42.6%), followed by the age group of "21-30" years (28.7%), followed by the age group "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%), followed by income range of "more than 25000" SAR (17.4%) and "less than 5000" SAR (12.2%).

Table1. 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			

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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

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5.2 Descriptive Statistics

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

	n	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. deviation
Omni Channel Transparency	551	1.00	5.00	3.74	1.27
Omni Channel Convenience	551	1.00	5.00	3.98	1.26
Omni Channel Uniformity	551	1.00	5.00	3.81	1.31
Perceived Behavioral Control	551	1.00	5.00	4.31	1.88
Omni Channel Selection	551	1.00	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 of "3.74" for omni channel transparency denotes that the respondents are leaning towards the agree side indicating omni channels are perceived as transparent among respondents. For the construct of omni channel convenience the mean value of "3.98" implies respondents mostly agree that they find omni channels as convenient for shopping. 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 being easily able to select omni channels for shopping. Lastly, the mean value of "4.11" for the construct of omni channel selection clearly indicates that respondents mostly agree on holding future intentions to shop from omni channel retailers.

5.3 Reliability and Validity

The reliability refers to the internal consistency of the items measuring a construct [15,30]. The reliability of the measures is assured with the help of inspection of cronbach alpha values [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 ".70", hence reliability of the measures used for this study is said 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 compositive 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 helps 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 minimum acceptable value for KMO is ".70" with a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity [28]. Table 3 reports the overall KMO value and Bartlett's test of Sphericity for the study. As evident in Table 3 the KMO value is seen above ".70" (.80>.70) with a significant Bartlett's test of Sphericity ($p < .05$). The individual KMO value 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 3. KMO and Bartlett's test

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

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 above ".30" for all measures of the study indicating the measures of the study are nicely weighing upon their respective constructs. In Table 4 it can be clearly seen that the AVE and CR values for all constructs of the study are 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 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 form 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 4. Standardized factor loadings, Cronbach alpha, AVE & CR

Constructs	Items	Factor loadings	AVE	CR
Omni channel transparency Alpha (.78)	The order status of 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 Channel Convenience 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 to learn 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 want using 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		

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

Before proceeding to test 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 ($\chi2$) 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 ($\chi2$) 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

Chi square χ2	90% CI for RMSEA

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CFA model		*Df*	CFI	SRMR	RMSEA	LL	UL
Model	416.82 *(p value =.25)*	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 between omni channel transparency and perceived behavioral control (β=.381, *p*<.001) supporting hypothesis H1. Table 7 also reports statistically significant positive relationship between omni channel convenience and perceived behavioral control (β=.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 is reported (β=.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 (β=.538, p<.001) is reported. 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 easily being able to make 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 is seen enhancing consumer's perceived behavioral control. So, in this study it can be inferred from the results that omni channel convenience is being valued by Saudi consumers. Significant positive relationship was also 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 can be said when Saudi consumers perceive enhanced ease in the ability of using omni channels for shopping they also develop a future intention of selecting that 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 section through perceived behavioral control. This study revealed the necessary omni channel attributes that influences the consumer's perception in seamless choosing of omni channels

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for their shopping. 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 the consumer's perception of being easily able to shop through omni channel retailers. 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 of Saudi Arabia 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 that positively influence consumers in selecting omni channels for shopping. Omni channel retailers needs 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 especially during initial encounters. Therefore, in order to create a trustworthy positive impression on consumers ensuring transparency in omni channels is important. The omni channel retailers also have to make zero compromises when it comes to providing convenience 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 that help in saving time and efforts of consumers. Besides providing of free and fast deliveries of products also stands among one of the ways of providing conveniences to consumers. Therefore, omni channel convenience 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 omni 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 omni channels 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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