

Students' Perceptions of Omnichannel Retailing and Their Influence on Purchase Intention in Fashion Retail

Azyati Ilyani Binti Aznan^{1*}, Nurul Fadzillah Binti Mohd Salleh²

1,2, Department of Commerce, Politeknik Ungku Omar, Department Of Commerce Politeknik Azlan Shah

*Corresponding author's email: azyati.aznan@puo.edu.my

Abstract: Omnichannel retailing has arisen as a disruptive approach in Malaysia's retail sector, integrating physical shopfronts with internet platforms to facilitate a cohesive purchasing experience. As Malaysian customers progressively embrace digital technology, fashion merchants are integrating online and physical channels to satisfy changing client expectations. This method not only improves ease and personalisation but also fortifies brand engagementTheory of planned behavior (TPB) framework is a foundation of this, and this study aims to examine the students' perceptions of omnichannel integration (attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control) and their purchase intention toward fashion retail. Online survey is conducted to collect data from 118 Diploma In Retail Management, Politeknik Ungku Omar students who have experience buying fashion products through omnichannel retailing. The data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 30. The finding finds that subjective norm has the highest mean towards purchase intention compared to other variables.

Keywords: omnichannel; channel integration; purchase intentions; students; fashion retailer

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The worldwide e-commerce industry is anticipated to hit \$11 trillion by 2028, propelled by technological innovations, enhanced delivery services, and increasing internet accessibility. As stated by GlobalData, "The global e-commerce market is on a trajectory of rapid expansion, set to reach \$11 trillion in 2028, driven by technological advancements, seamless delivery services, and rising internet penetration" (GlobalData, 2025). The market is projected to expand at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 11.1% from 2023 to 2028, with China and the United States leading the market, holding shares of 33% and 30%, respectively (GlobalData, 2025).

Malaysia's e-commerce market is poised for significant growth, with projections indicating that it will reach RM1.65 trillion (approximately \$365 billion) by 2025. This growth is supported by the National E-commerce Strategic Roadmap (NESR), which aims to enhance digital trade and e-commerce adoption across the country (Ministry of Communications and Multimedia Malaysia, 2025). Other than that, This growth is driven by increasing consumer preference for online shopping, rising internet and smartphone usage, and secure online payment systems. The e-commerce transaction reported at 35.7% due to the acceptance of multiple payment methods that supports this evolutions (Retail Asia, 2024).

The Internet and related technological advancements have rapidly changed the landscape of the global retail industry. It has revolutionised how business is conducted and has helped create a more efficient market by making advertising and selling products more interactive and appealing. From traditional brick and mortar, customers now are changing and they choose to shopping via multiple channel that the retailer offers Teixeira et al. (2022). Omnichannel retail, which refers to the integration of various sales channels like physical stores, online platforms, and mobile apps into a



seamless customer experience, is poised to be a dominant force in the retail industry. (Massi et al., 2023). Omnichannel retail involves integrating different sales channels, such as brick-and-mortar stores, online platforms, and mobile apps, to create a cohesive experience for consumers.

According to Kim et al. (2023), several factors contribute to the transition from online shopping to in-store shopping, including dissatisfaction with online shopping experiences. Their research indicates that a significant number of consumers still favor physical retail locations despite the growth of mobile shopping, as they desire assurance and trustworthiness in their purchases. This is consistent with previous research by Kim et al. (2017), which observed that consumers frequently gather product information offline before making purchases online at cheaper prices, while others opt to shop in-store because of concerns regarding the unpredictability of online transactions.

Current studies in this domain have primarily focused on the retailer's viewpoint. Cai, Y., & Lo, H. (2022) analyze the obstacles and tactics retailers encounter in overseeing omnichannel operations. Additionally, Izmirli, S., et al. (2022) examines the influence of omnichannel supply chain management on retail performance. Piotrowicz, W., & Cuthbertson, R. (2023) examine the obstacles of channel integration in omnichannel retailing, emphasizing strategies for retailers to surmount issues associated with digital marketing. These studies jointly emphasize the perspective of retailers in understanding and implementing effective omnichannel strategies that enhance customer engagement and operational efficiency. While some studies have focused on retailer perspectives and the operational aspects of omnichannel strategies, there remains a lack of comprehensive studies that investigate into how consumers perceive and engage with these integrated channels in the fashion sector.

1.1 Research Objective

- 1. To examine the relationship between students' attitude and purchase intention in fashion retail.
- 2. To examine the relationship between students' subjective norm and purchase intention in fashion retail.
- 3. To examine the relationship between students' perceived behavioral control and purchase intention in fashion retail.

1.2 Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between students'attitude and purchase intention in fashion retail?



- 2. What is the relationship between students'subjective norm and purchase intention in fashion retail?
- 3. What is the relationship between students' perceived behavioral control and purchase intention in fashion retail?

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEWS

2.1 Omnichannel Retailing and Omnichannel integration

The significant shift in consumer buying behaviors has required a fresh perspective on retail strategy, one that emphasizes the creation of a smooth and integrated customer experience across all points of interaction. Achieving omnichannel integration is crucial for realizing the full capabilities of this evolving retail environment. Retailers are now tasked with aligning the goals, design, and execution of their sales channels to improve the customer's shopping experience. The extent of channel integration serves as an indicator of a company's level of omnichannel functionality (Iglesías-Pradas et al., 2021).

2.2 Theory of Planned Behaviour

The Theory of Planned Behaviour is a well-known way to describe and anticipate how people act in certain situations (Kachkar & Djafri, 2022). It developed from the Theory of Reasoned Action, presenting a more extensive model by integrating the notion of perceived behavioural control, which recognises that individuals' actions are not invariably subject to total volitional control (Dotong & Manalang, 2023). The theory asserts that a person's desire to engage in a specific behaviour is the most immediate predictor of that behaviour and the three main ideas influence this intention: attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (Yasir et al., 2021) The Theory of Planned Behaviour serves as a significant framework in this studies for analysing students' views and their impact on purchase intentions within the realm of omnichannel shopping, particularly in the fashion sector

2.3 Attitude

Attitude denotes the extent to which an individual possesses a positive or negative assessment of the behaviour in issue (Novitasari, Asbari, & Purwanto, 2022). The Theory of Planned Behaviour serves as a significant framework for analysing students' views and their impact on purchase intentions within the realm of omnichannel shopping, particularly in the fashion sector. Under attitude this research include Integrated product and price (IPP) and Integrated promotion (IP). Integrating product and price can be decisive to the retailers and effecting to the customer attitude.. One major issue is ensuring consistent pricing across online and offline



channels. Inconsistent pricing can lead to customer dissatisfaction and undermine brand credibility (Kjuus & Lie, 2024). Additionally, managing inventory and product assortment across channels requires sophisticated logistical systems to ensure timely and accurate product availability. Integrated promotion (IP) in omnichannel retailing is enhancing customer engagement by unified all promotions and marketing strategy across all the channel that the retailers have (Arora et al., 2021). This approach ensures that promotions, messaging, and branding are aligned across digital platforms, physical stores, and other touchpoints, providing a seamless and personalized customer experience. Quach et al., (2023) study revealed that cross-channel promotion has a significant effect on consumers' emotional responses. This is in line with Butkouskaya et al., (2023) study that find integrated marketing communications consistency positively impacts product and service satisfaction.

2.4 Subjective Norm

Subjective norms denote the perceived social pressure to engage in or refrain from a behaviour, originating from perceptions regarding the expectations of significant persons (Pristl, Kilian, & Mann, 2021). Integrated Transaction Information (ITI) involves the synchronization of transaction data such as purchase history, payment methods, and order status across all retail channels, including brick-and-mortar stores, online shopping sites, and mobile apps (Chen & Chi, 2021). In an omnichannel setting, ITI guarantees that customers receive real-time, accurate information no matter which channel they use to engage. For example, if a student buys an item online, they can return it in person without any inconsistencies in the transaction records, thus minimizing hassle during post-purchase processes. Anozie et al. (2024) states that consistent information across all shopping channels is crucial because it synchronizing product details, pricing, and inventory, leading to a better customer experience. Retailers unify the shopping experience by providing consistent information across all channels. Mishra (2024) have shown that integrated information access (IIA) significantly enhances the customer experience by reducing information asymmetry and improving decision-making processes. When customers can access consistent product information across channels, they are more likely to engage with the brand and perceive a higher level of service quality.

2.5 Perceived Behavioral Control

Perceived behavioural control pertains to a person's conviction regarding their capacity to execute a behaviour, taking into account the existence of circumstances that may either promote or hinder performance (Fawehinmi, Yusliza, Tanveer, & Abdullahi, 2024). The impression of control can profoundly affect intentions and actions, particularly in situations when individuals encounter challenges or uncertainty (Cuong, 2024). In omnichannel shopping, where

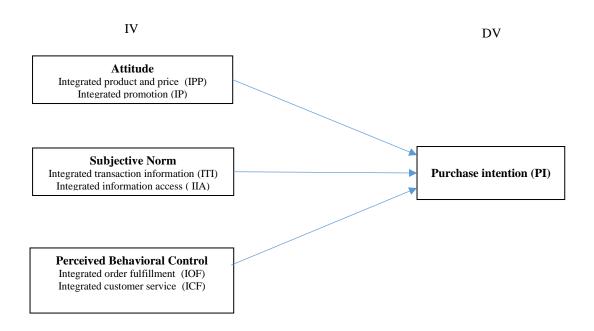


consumers engage with companies across several channels, perceived behavioural control significantly influences their experiences with integrated order fulfilment and customer support. Integrated Order Fulfilment involves managing inventory and processing orders across multiple sales channels to deliver a cohesive customer experience (Vaka, 2024). This approach integrates both physical and digital platforms, allowing customers to shop at their convenience while maintaining consistent service standards. Integrated Customer Service (ICS) involves synchronizing customer service operations across multiple channels, such as live chat, email, social media, and in-store support, to deliver a cohesive customer experience (Khalid, 2024). Achieving this requires robust system integration, including tools like CRM and inventory management systems, which provide customer service teams with a unified view of customer interactions (Ledro, Nosella, & Dalla Pozza, 2023).

2.6 Purchase Intention

Purchase intentions, which occur during the pre-purchase phase, are critical because they represent the motivational elements that impact consumer behavior and are thus a key indicator of actual behavior (Peña-García et al., 2020). The SOR framework helps to explain online impulse buying by pinpointing what causes it and determining which aspects are most impactful (Syastra & Wangdra, 2018). Factors like browsing and motivation may have an impact on mobile commerce impulse purchases (Zheng et al., 2019).

Figure 1
Research Framework





3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The research design is based on descriptive research. It is descriptive research because this research aims to describe characteristics of a population or phenomenon being studied. The objective of descriptive research is to explore or search through a problem or situation to provide insight and understanding that required discovery of the idea based on the data that is being gathered through the questionnaire. This research is analyse using Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 30.

3.2 Population and Sample

The population of this study is 180 Diploma In Retail Management, Commerce Department, Politeknik Ungku Omar student. The sample size of this study is 118 students (based krejcie and morgan table 1970) who has an experience of shopping through omnichannel and learning about omnichannel topic in their Introduction To Retailing course.

3.4 Data Collection Method

The data collection method is based on quantitative method because the data was collected by using questionnaire. Data in this study were collected via an online web survey. The survey has been distributed online using goggle form to selected Diploma In Retail Management student with filtered questions which is Did you have an experience buying fashion item using omnichannel retailing?

3.5 Sampling Method

The sampling method is based on convenience sampling. For this research sampling purposes, this method is considered as easy, fastest, and most efficient way to collect the information that were needed. To ensure the respondents fulfilled the criteria, we inquired respondents if they had experience shopping with omnichannel fashion retailer as a filter questions. Those who provide a positive response would be asked to continue answer the questions and to those who indicated negative answers would be chosen as the respondent to answer the questions

3.6 Research Instrument

This research instrument is adapted from M Zhang et al (2018) and Lee (2020) for the independent variable and Shi et al (2020) for the dependent variable. The questionnaire has been divided into three section which is Section A: Demographic profile, Section B: Independent Variable (Attitude, Subjective Norm and perceived behavioral) and Section C: Dependent Variable (Purchase Intention).



4.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. The following statistical techniques were employed descriptive statistics: frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were calculated to describe the demographic characteristics and responses to questionnaire items.

The interpretation of mean scores was guided by the following scale:

Table 1Mean Score Range

Mean Score Range	Interpretation
1.00 – 2.33	Low
2.34 – 3.66	Moderate
3.67 – 5.00	High

Adapted from Chua (2012)

4.1 Frequency analysis

Table 2Demographic Profile of Respondents

DEMO	GRAPHIC PROFILE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Gender	Male	36	30.5%
	Female	82	69.5%
Race	Malay	90	76.3%
	Indian	25	21.2%
	Chinese	2	1.7%
	Others	1	0.8%
Semester	1	24	20.3%
	2	21	17.8%
	3	11	9.3%
	4	40	33.9%
	5	22	18.7%
Parents income	Below RM4,849	90	76.3%
	RM4,850 - RM10,959	24	20.3%
	RM10,960 above	4	3.4%
CGPA	2.00 - 2.99	24	20.3%
	3.00 - 3.33	38	32.2%



3.43 - 3.67	26	22.0%
3.68 - 4.00	8	6.8%
No HPNM (sem 1)	22	18.6%

Table 2 presents the demographic characteristics of the 118 student respondents who participated in this study. The analysis covers gender, race, semester, parents' income, and cumulative grade point average (CGPA). The majority of respondents were female (n = 82, 69.5%), while males accounted for 30.5% (n = 36) of the sample. This gender distribution suggests a higher participation rate among female students, which is consistent with trends observed in similar studies on student consumer behavior in higher education contexts. In terms of ethnicity, the sample was predominantly Malay (n = 90, 76.3%), followed by Indian (n = 25, 21.2%), Chinese (n = 2, 1.7%), and Others (n = 1, 0.8%). This distribution reflects the demographic composition of the student population at the institution where the study was conducted. Respondents were distributed across five semesters, with the largest proportion in Semester 4 (n = 40, 33.9%). Semester 1 students constituted 20.3% (n = 24), Semester 2 comprised 17.8% (n = 21), Semester 3 had 9.3% (n = 11), and Semester 5 made up 17.8% (n = 22) of the sample. The representation across semesters ensures that the findings capture perspectives from students at different stages of their academic journey. Regarding parents' income, the majority of respondents (n = 90, 76.3%) reported a household income below RM4,849. About one-fifth (n = 24, 20.3%) had parents with an income between RM4,850 and RM10,959, while only 3.4% (n = 4) reported an income of RM10,960 and above. This indicates that most respondents come from lower-income households, which may influence their purchasing intentions and behaviors. For academic performance, the largest group of students reported a CGPA between 3.00 and 3.33 (n = 38, 32.2%), followed by those with a CGPA of 3.34 to 3.67 (n = 26, 22.0%) and 2.00 to 2.99 (n = 24, 20.3%). A smaller proportion achieved a CGPA of 3.68 to 4.00 (n = 8, 6.8%). Additionally, 22 students (18.6%) did not have a CGPA recorded, likely because they were first-semester students (No HPNM, sem 1).

4.2 Mean analysis

Table 3Descriptive Statistics for Attitude

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
IPP - Consistent product description	3.84	.867	High
IPP - Consistent product price	3.80	.957	High
IPP - Consistent product category	3.79	.977	High
IP - Promotions on online channel	3.53	.984	Moderate
IP - Advertisements both online and offline	3.68	.933	High
IP - Provides address (website)	3.90	.928	High
IP - Same brand name, logo and slogan	3.92	.869	High



IP - Can redeem voucher	3.75	.980	High
Overall average	3.78	.936	High

Table 3 presents mean analysis attitude variable which is respondents' attitudes toward various aspects of Intellectual Property Protection (IPP) and Integrated Promotions(IP) in facilitating purchasing intentions. The mean scores indicate generally positive attitudes across all items, with values ranging from 3.53 to 3.92. The highest mean is observed for Integrated Promotion (IP) - I can find the same brand name, logo and slogan of the retailer on the website, social media channels and at the physical store (M = 3.92, SD = 0.869), suggesting strong agreement that consistent branding elements are recognize by the customers. Conversely, Integrated Promotion (IP) - Promotions on online channels are same as at the physical store has the lowest mean (M = 3.53, SD = 0.984), which may imply a relatively weaker perception of the consistency between both physical and online promotions implied by the retailer.

Table 4Descriptive Statistics for Subjective Norm

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
ITI - Access both online and offline purchase	4.00	.000	High
history			
ITI - Can access prior purchase	4.00	.000	High
ITI - Future purchase recommendations	4.00	.000	High
IIA - Can search product availability	3.84	.886	High
IIA - Easily access websites	3.85	.921	High
IIA - Can check company inventory status	3.78	.935	High
IIA - Can search answers using internet kiosk	3.73	.903	High
Overall Average	3.89	.521	High

Table 4 presents on subjective norms indicates respondents' perceptions of the accessibility and usefulness of Information Technology Interfaces (ITI) and Internet Information Access (IIA) in facilitating purchasing intentions. The mean scores indicate generally positive attitudes across all items, with values ranging from 3.73 to 4.00. The highest mean is observed for three elements which is all from "Information Technology Interfaces (ITI) elements which is – I can access both my online and offline purchase history through the retailer's website or at the physical store, I can access my prior



purchase history through the retailer's website or at the physical store and The retailer provides me with future purchase recommendation all with (M = 4.00, SD = 0.000). Conversely, Internet Information Access (IIA) - I can search for answers using the internet kiosks provided in the physical store without asking for assistance has the lowest mean (M = 3.73, SD = 0.903), which may imply a relatively weaker perception of the internet kiosk.

Table 5Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Behavioral

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
IOF - Can self-collect at physical store	3.76	.824	High
IOF - Easily ship online order	3.73	.834	High
IOF - Can make payments at physical stores	3.75	.989	High
IOF - Can order out-of-stock item in websites	3.67	.961	High
ICS - Can return, repair, or exchange products	3.74	.928	High
ICS - Post-purchase services support	3.74	.871	High
ICS - Can access service assistant	3.80	.930	High
Overall average	3.74	.905	High

Table 5 presents on perceived behavioural control (PBC) indicates respondents' assessments of Integrated Order fulfilment (IOF) and Integrated Customer Service (ICS). The item with the highest mean score is Integrated Customer Service (ICS) – I can access the service assistant through a real-time chat program through the retailer's website and social media platforms (M = 3.80, SD = 0.930), suggesting that respondents view access to service aid as the most advantageous and empowering feature in their behavioural control over purchasing activities. In contrast, the item Integrated Order fulfilment (IOF) – I can order for out-of-stock items in the physical store through their website has the lowest mean (M = 3.67, SD = 0.961), suggesting that respondents exhibit comparatively less confidence or ease in ordering items that are unavailable online, despite the score remaining above the median.

Table 6Descriptive Statistics for Purchase Intention

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
PI - Intent to purchase	3.89	.845	High
PI - Intent to recommend	3.91	.867	High
PI - Intent to make another purchase	3.92	.863	High
Overall average	3.91	.858	High



Table 6 presents on purchase intention indicates respondents' behavioural intentions towards purchase activities, based on a sample size of 118. The highest mean is recorded Purchase Intention (PI) - I have an intent to make another purchase from this retailer if I need the product I will buy (M = 3.92, SD = 0.863), indicating that respondents exhibit a strong propensity for repeat purchases, which signifies robust customer loyalty or satisfaction. The lowest mean, though somewhat, is Purchase Intention (PI) I have intent to purchase the products from this retailer, (M = 3.89, SD = 0.845). Although it is the lowest score, it nevertheless signifies a positive inclination towards early purchasing decisions.

5.0 DISCUSSION

This study offers empirical insights into students' perceptions of essential elements of omnichannel integration (attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control. This study indicate that that subjective norm has the highest mean (M = 3.89) towards purchase intention following by attitudes (M = 3.78) and perceived behavioral control (M = 3.74). The results also indicate that under each variable which is attitude dominant for integrated promotion (IP) (M = 3.92), subjective norm dominant for information technology interfaces (ITI) (M = 4.00) and perceived behavioral control dominants for integrated customer service (ICS) (M = 3.80). The demographic profile of respondents primarily female, Malay, and from low-income households indicates that fashion merchants to emphasise pricing, reliable branding, and efficient customer service across many channels to effectively engage this group. Conversely, Integrated Promotion (IP) -Promotions on online channels are same as at the physical store has the lowest mean (M = 3.53)among all shows that less coordination of online promotions and physical store influence the students buying intention. This should be improved for strategic enhancement in the digital retail experience in omnichannel retailing. The high ratings on buy intention (M= 3.92) particularly for recurrent purchases, indicate a significant opportunity to cultivate enduring client relationships through consistent multichannel strategy. These results underscore the significance of the Theory of Planned Behaviour in elucidating students' purchasing intentions and provide practical implications for fashion companies seeking to enhance their omnichannel strategy targeting the student demographic.

Conclusion

In summary, a well integrated omnichannel fashion retailing environment (attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control) will positively influence students purchase intention in fashion retail. A mismatched retail data across all channel will surely negatively affect the purchase intention. Retailers are urged to comprehensively integrate all retail channels in an omnichannel approach to attract more customers and enhance profitability.



Limitation and future research

A significant limitation of this study is the use of convenience sampling, which may hinder the generalizability of the findings. The sample may not accurately represent the larger population, as participants were selected based on their availability and willingness to participate. This non-probability sampling method raises the risk of sample bias, which could affect the findings' reliability and external validity. Future research should include probability sampling techniques, such as stratified or random sampling, to obtain a more representative sample. This would enhance the generalizability of the findings and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research issue across diverse demographic groups.

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