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CONSUMER BEHAVIOR | RESEARCH ARTICLE

Understanding Omnichannel Shopping Behaviors: Incorporating Channel Integration into The Theory of Reasoned Action

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Abstract: Young consumers prefer to switch shopping channels freely for optimal shopping results and experiences. To meet these changing needs, retailers have begun implementing an omnichannel retail strategy that integrates their various shopping channels to create a consistent and seamless shopping environment. Thus, this study examines the effect of young consumers' perceptions of the retailer's channel consistency and seamlessness on their attitudes, intentions, and behaviors in the omnichannel retailing context. We incorporated the concept of channel consistency and seamlessness into the Theory of Reasoned Action to address the study objective. A consumer research firm was hired to recruit millennials and Gen Z consumers, and online surveys took place in the U.S. in 2019, and 430 usable surveys were analyzed with SPSS and AMOS. The results confirmed that consumers' perception of channel seamlessness positively impacted their attitudes toward omnichannel shopping. Furthermore, these attitudes and subjective norms increased their intentions, leading to engagement in omnichannel shopping. The findings suggest that retailers must create smooth and uninterrupted shopping experiences across channels and proactively manage social components to create a customer's omnichannel shopping experience.

Keywords: channel consistency, channel integration, channel seamlessness, omnichannel shopping, theory of reasoned action

JEL Classification: D1, D11, D12, L11

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PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

As the retail landscape changes rapidly due to the advancement of retail technologies, understanding how consumers adopt to the current retail environment is an important task for researchers and practitioners. Our research investigates consumers' behaviors toward omnichannel retailing, one of the emerging trends, from theoretical and practical perspectives. Although we face challenges in collecting data from a broader and more diverse population and providing respondents with more realistic shopping when they answered the survey, findings can be useful guidelines for retailers to implement effective omnichannel retail strategies. In addition, this study can also be a good reference for future research on omnichannel retailing and younger-generation consumers.

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1. Introduction

The recent advancement of technology and fast-evolving digital society has accelerated changes in retail environments and consumer behaviors. Today's consumers prefer to control their channel choices and shopping experiences. They want to select a channel for shopping information, switch to another channel for a purchase transaction, and decide the method of post-purchase activities. More importantly, consumers want their shopping processes to be easy, compelling, and uninterrupted. Retailers have identified these consumers as omnichannel shoppers, mostly consisting of the two younger generations, Millennials and Gen Z (Baykal, 2021; Donnelly & Scaff, 2013).

Many retailers established their presence on various channels such as websites, social media, email, and physical stores, but quickly learned that they needed to integrate all shopping channels. For example, consumers expect a suite of touchpoints to contact a retailer but demand every conversation or interaction, regardless of channel, to be consistent and harmonized during their shopping journeys (Sopadjieva, Dholakia, & Benjamin, 2017). Therefore, omnichannel retailers must design a fully integrated shopping system to deliver a consistent and seamless consumer shopping experience across all channels to entice consumers who expect the same. In other words, when a retailer offers consistent and seamless shopping information and experiences across channels, consumers will likely perceive that the retailers' various channels are fully-integrated and engage in omnichannel shopping. Consequently, channel integration, consisting of channel consistency and channel seamlessly, is an antecedent of a successful omnichannel retail strategy (Ackermann, 2017; Chen & Chi, 2021; Huré, Picot-Coupey, Kannan, & Inman, 2015; Picot-Coupey, Huré, & Piveteau, 2016; Shi, Wang, Chen, & Zhang, 2020; Verhoef, Kannan, & Inman, 2015).

This study addresses two areas that need scholarly and practical attention. First, the importance of channel integration in an omnichannel retail system should be examined. There are mixed views on channel integration as an integral part of omnichannel retailing (Gasparin et al., 2022). While several studies have recognized the necessity of channel integration within the omnichannel retail strategy (Huré et al., 2017; Picot-Coupey et al., 2016), other studies have suggested that integration across channels might not be required (Patrício, Fisk, Falcão e Cunha, & Constantine, 2011; Huang, Chang, & Chen, 2005). Identifying the effect of channel integration on consumers' omnichannel shopping behaviors would answer the importance of channel integration in omnichannel retailing. Second, the significance of millennials and Gen Z as omnichannel retail consumers should be investigated. Although researchers have suggested that these younger generation consumers are the main omnichannel shoppers (Baykal, 2021; Donnelly & Scaff, 2013), research is scant on their omnichannel shopping behaviors. With the retail industry rapidly adopting omnichannel retailing, researchers must understand the behaviors of millennials and Gen Z, especially in terms of channel integration in the multichannel retail environment.

Researchers have conceptualized channel consistency and seamlessness as two central components to integrate various channels (Huré et al., 2017; Picot-Coupey et al., 2016). While their studies used small study samples or qualitatively tested the concept, our study aims to empirically investigate channel consistency and seamlessness with sizable survey data collected from younger generation consumers and see their influences on consumers' attitudes toward shopping through an omnichannel option. We believe that when consumers perceive that they can access consistent product information, pricing, assortment, and services across channels, they form positive attitudes toward engaging in an omnichannel shopping option (Huré et al., 2017; Picot-Coupey et al., 2016; Saghiri, Wilding, Mena, & Bourlakis, 2017; Xu & Jackson, 2018). Similarly, when consumers perceive that they can have a seamless shopping journey across channels, they develop positive attitudes toward engaging in an omnichannel shopping option (Huré et al., 2017; Picot-Coupey et al., 2016; Saghiri et al., 2017).

The theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) has been a viable framework in various consumer behavioral studies for decades. Many studies have confirmed that consumer behavior is led by behavioral intention, which is the outcome of two antecedents, attitudes and

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subjective norms (Pookulangara, Hawley, & Xiao, 2011). The causal relationships of TRA were validated in various consumption settings such as clothing purchases (Belleau, Summers, Xu, & Pinel, 2007; Kim, Kim, & Kumar, 2003), online shopping (Ashokkumar & Nagarajan, 2021), social media influences (Copeland & Zhao, 2020), mall patronage (Evans, Christiansen, & Gill, 1996), and organic purchases (Kumar, Gupta, Kumar, Singh, & Singh, 2022). Another study objective is to explore how TRA predicts millennials and Gen Z consumers' omnichannel shopping behaviors. Our research is one of the earliest studies that apply the concept of channel integration (channel consistency and seamlessness) into TRA to explore younger generation consumers' shopping behaviors in the omnichannel retail environment. The findings will provide valuable implications to retailers for implementing or reevaluating their omnichannel retail strategies to target younger generation consumers. They will also make valuable additions to the current literature on millennials and Gen Z consumer behaviors and omnichannel retailing.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Younger Generations: Millennials and Gen Z

The millennial generation, born between 1980 and 1994, is the largest consumer segment in the United States, with an annual spending power of $600 billion (Kasasa, 2019). Most millennials shop multiple stores seeking deals, and an even larger percentage bargain-hunt online sales and use coupons. In addition, millennials are likely to do business with a brand they follow and are likely to follow the brand before making the purchase. According to Donnelly and Scaff (2013), millennials demand the convenience of omnichannel accessibility during their shopping, which translates into having an integrated experience that effortlessly transitions their consumer data from their smartphone to laptops to local stores and back again.

Generation Z, born in or after 1995, is the first digitally native generation and does not differentiate between online and offline channels (Kasasa, 2019). This group has a spending power of $44 billion annually and expects the same quality and speed of an online channel to occur in stores (Cheung, Glass, & Wong, 2017). Although most Gen Z users use laptops to shop online, they also prefer in-store shopping for purchase speed and the social aspect of shopping with friends. Many Gen Z consumers use their smartphones in stores to look at unavailable items. In addition, they use their phones to determine if they might prefer other items and to look up price comparisons. They need more patience for unresponsive technology, prone to errors, hard to navigate, or slow to load (Cheung et al., 2017). A majority of Gen Z shoppers say that the ease of switching between channels is the most important feature when shopping and are eager to adopt innovative solutions that provide direct value, enhance the shopping experience, and enable a frictionless shopping experience (Cheung, Glass, Haller, & Wong, 2018).

Millennials and Gen Z share common characteristics that distinguish them from other generational consumer segments. Both generations exhibit high digital dependency and tech-savviness, emphasize shopping experiences, and pursue sustainable lifestyles (Cheung et al., 2018; Donnelly & Scaff, 2013; Kasasa, 2019). A collective term for the two generations, such as the "M.Z. generation" or referring to Gen Z as "millennial+," sometimes appears in literature (Baykal, 2021; Jang, 2021). Most researchers believe that retailers have created an omnichannel retail strategy to meet millennials' demand and refined it to satisfy the needs of Gen Z (Baykal, 2021).

2.2 Channel Integration: Consistency and Seamlessness

Consumers can switch channels for optimal shopping outcomes in the omnichannel shopping environment. Therefore, retailers need to integrate various touchpoints that consumers can use to create a harmonized shopping environment across channel stages (e.g., search, purchases, delivery, and return) and channel types (e.g., offline, online, mobile, and social media) (Berman & Thelen, 2018; Saghiri et al., 2017). Channel integration is not an option but a requirement when creating an omnichannel retail system (Picot-Coupey et al., 2016; Shetty, Jeevananda, & Kalghatgi, 2018). Previous research has conceptualized channel integration as synchronized retail channels to provide consumers with streamlined, consistent, and seamless shopping opportunities

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(Picot-Coupey et al., 2016; Shetty et al., 2018). Consumers evaluate the degree of channel integration based on their perceptions of retailers' abilities to offer consistent and seamless shopping across all channels (Huré et al., 2017; Picot-Coupey et al., 2016).

Perceived consistency is how consumers believe a retailer allows them to have consistent shopping information and experiences across channels (Picot-Coupey et al., 2016). The alignment of product information, pricing, assortment, and services among channels adds value to consumer shopping in the omnichannel retail environment (Huré et al., 2017; Saghiri et al., 2017), which will lead to consumers' favorable attitudes toward engaging in omnichannel shopping. Consistency among channels also makes consumers feel comfortable engaging in omnichannel shopping (Xu & Jackson, 2018), which is a positive signal for consumers to form a favorable attitude.

Perceived seamlessness is how consumers believe a retailer allows them to move from one channel to another effortlessly and uninterruptedly (Picot-Coupey et al., 2016). Seamlessness is a precursor for easy, speedy, and pleasant shopping experiences in the omnichannel retail environment (Huré et al., 2017; Saghiri et al., 2017) and positively increases consumer attitudes toward engaging in omnichannel shopping.

H1: Perceived consistency across a retailer's channel types will positively influence consumers' attitudes toward engaging in omnichannel shopping

H2: Perceived seamlessness across a retailer's channel types will positively influence consumers' attitudes toward engaging in omnichannel shopping

2.3 Attitude, Subjective Norms, and Intentions

According to TRA, attitude toward a behavior is useful for predicting an individual's intention to perform that behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Empirical investigations on shopping support the importance of the relationship between these two constructs. For example, studies have successfully linked consumers' positive attitudes to their intentions in physical and virtual retail settings (Evans et al., 1996; Kim et al., 2003). In relation to channel choice for shopping, consumer attitudes toward a retailer's channel offering positively affected their intentions to engage in omnichannel shopping (Kwon & Lennon, 2009; Ryu & Fortenberry, 2021; Seock & Norton, 2007).

Subjective norm represents the impact that important others, such as family members and friends, have on an individual's intention to engage in an action or behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Prayidyaningrum & Djamaludin, 2016). The opinion of relevant others will likely impact a consumer's desire to use different channels for shopping. First, the emergence of social networks has profoundly changed how and where consumers shop, but even more importantly, how they share information with others about what they buy and where their transactions take place. Second, product reviews posted by established customers likely play a role in whether a shopper will complete a purchase online or seek additional product information in a store setting or from an alternative channel. Finally, individuals highly engaged with technology may be motivated to employ a variety of shopping channels for personal fulfillment or efficiency and as a means of impression management. In other words, tech-savvy individuals want others to perceive them as being knowledgeable about shopping technologies, i.e., an opinion leader. Similar to the case of attitude in TRA, evidence indicates that subjective norm influences shopping intentions online and offline (Copeland & Zhao, 2020; Evans et al., 1996; Kim et al., 2003).

TRA proposes that behavioral intentions represent the motivational factors necessary to trigger actual behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). The stronger the behavioral intention, the more likely an individual will engage in the predicted behavior. More studies must explore this assumed relationship in the nontraditional retail setting (Lim, Osman, Salahuddin, Romle, & Abdullah, 2016). Several recent studies reported a causal relationship between intention and behavior in online and mobile shopping (Chopdar, Korfiatis, Sivakumar, & Lytras, 2018). Other retail consumer studies supported the same connection between intention and behavior in the omnichannel retail environment

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among young participants and international consumers (Park & Kim, 2021; Silva, Martins, & de Sousa, 2018).

H3: Consumer attitude toward using multiple retail channels for shopping will positively influence their intentions to engage in omnichannel shopping

H4: Subjective norms will positively influence consumers' intention to engage in omnichannel shopping

H5: Intention to engage in omnichannel shopping will positively influence consumers' purchase behaviors.

3. Conceptual Framework

This study incorporates the perceived channel integration into TRA to propose five hypotheses. First, figure 1 illustrates that consumers' perception of consistency and seamlessness of the retailer's shopping channels positively affects their attitudes toward omnichannel shopping. This attitude and others' opinions (subjective norm) increase consumers' omnichannel shopping intentions, which leads to omnichannel shopping.

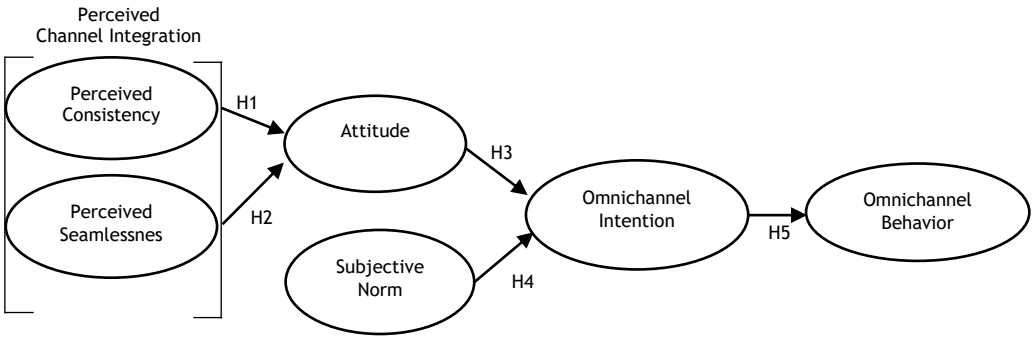

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

4. Methods

4.1 Participants

Several studies have identified millennials and Gen Z consumers as the main omnichannel shoppers (Baykal, 2021; Donnelly & Scaff, 2013). Thus, this study focused on these two younger generations in the U.S. Qualitrics recruited survey participants and collected online surveys through their online survey system in 2019. Qualtrics are widely used for creating online surveys and recruiting study samples in academic research. A convenience sampling method was used. A total of 470 online surveys were collected from U.S. millennials and Gen Z. After excluding incomplete surveys, and this study analyzed 430 usable survey data.

4.2 Measurement

This study used a consumer research firm to administer an online survey to collect the primary data. Omnichannel shopping was operationalized as consumers using online and offline interchangeably in a single shopping journey (Sopadjieva et al., 2017). The online survey questionnaire comprised three parts. The first part included screening questions to assess whether participants have the resources and devices to engage in omnichannel shopping. The questions included owning a WiFi-enabled mobile device, having experience using multiple shopping channels on a particular shopping journey, and being a customer of a retailer with both offline and online commerce capacity. Those who met the requirement moved to the next part of the questionnaire and were asked to consider the retailer they had identified in the screening stage when answering the remaining questionnaire. It also collected the participants' demographic information, such as age and gender.

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The second part of the questionnaire examined the construct of channel consistency and channel seamlessness. Channel consistency was operationalized as the level of consistency in the retailer's promotion, pricing, product offering, and service quality across channels (Huré et al., 2017; Picot-Coupey et al., 2016). Channel seamlessness was operationalized as the level of seamlessness in search, purchase, fulfillment, and return transactions across channels (Huré et al., 2017; Picot-Coupey et al., 2016). The four-item scales for each construct were developed and modified from scales that were addressed and used in the previous theoretical and empirical studies on omnichannel retailing (Huré et al., 2017; Picot-Coupey et al., 2016; Saghiri, 2017; Shi et al., 2020; Verhoef et al., 2015).

The third section of the questionnaire measured the TRA constructs of attitude, subjective norm, intention, and behavior in the omnichannel shopping context. The term attitude is operationalized as consumers' positive, negative, or neutral feelings toward engaging in omnichannel shopping (Ajen & Albarracín, 2007; Fishbein, 1967), and a three-item scale was adopted from the work of Fishbein and Ajen (1975). The term subjective norm refers to social pressure or important others' opinions about consumers engaging in omnichannel shopping (Ajen & Albarracín, 2007; Fishbein, 1967), and a two-item scale was adopted from the behavioral research (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Finally, omnichannel shopping intentions denote consumers' willingness to engage in omnichannel shopping, while omnichannel shopping behavior refers to consumer purchases using an omnichannel shopping option (Lawry & Bhappu, 2021; Park & Kim, 2021; Ryu, 2019). The recent omnichannel retail research provided the scales for the intention and behavior constructs (Lawry & Bhappu, 2021; Park & Kim, 2021; Ryu, 2019; Ryu & Fortenberry, 2021; Shi et al., 2020).

4.3 Analysis

All items measuring constructs in the proposed research model used a seven-point Likert scale, and the wording was modified to reflect the omnichannel shopping context. The measurement items and hypotheses were assessed using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), respectively. IBM SPSS 26 and AMOS were employed for analysis.

5. Findings

5.1 Study Participants

Among 430 eligible participants, 200 were millennials (46.5%), and 230 were Gen Z consumers (53.5%). For a gender composition, 249 were males (57.9%), and 181 were females (42.1%). All participants owned a mobile device and had previously used it for shopping. They also indicated that they often shop at a retailer that offers both online and offline shopping options.

5.2 Measurement Model

The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) confirmed the factor loadings ranged from 0.70 to 0.87 and Cronbach's alpha ranged from 0.77 to 0.86 with a good model fit: x^2 = 389.2 with *df* of 137 and *p*-value < 0.001; RMSEA of 0.06; CFI of 0.94; and SRMR of 0.03. The composite reliability (C.R.) and average variance extracted (AVE) ranged from 0.77 to 0.87 and 0.53 to 0.72, respectively. The values of all variables met the statistical standards the previous research recommended (Hermanda, Sumarwan, & Tinaprilla, 2019). Table 1 summarizes the constructs and corresponding measurement items with confirmatory factor analysis results.

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Table 1. Measurement model and statistics

Constructs and Items	Factor Loading*
Channel Consistency (Cronbach's α = 0.86, AVE = 0.62, CR = 0.87)	
While I am shopping at this retailer, I think:	
Promotion is consistent across channels.	0.76
Pricing is consistent across channels	0.82
The product offering is consistent across channels.	0.80
Service quality is consistent across channels.	0.76
Channel Seamlessness (Cronbach's α = 0.82, AVE = 0.54, CR = 0.83)	
While I am shopping at this retailer, I think:	
Product search process is seamless across channels.	0.74
Purchase transaction is seamless across channels.	0.73
Merchandise fulfillment is seamless across channels.	0.75
Merchandise return is seamless across channels.	0.72
Attitude (Cronbach's α = 0.82, AVE = 0.62, CR = 0.83)	
Using different channels interchangeably as needed on a particular shopping:	
Is a good idea.	0.74
Is a smart idea.	0.82
Helps me complete my shopping.	0.79
Subjective Norm (Cronbach's α = 0.83, AVE = 0.72, CR = 0.83)	
It is important that my family's approval for using different channels interchangeably as needed on a particular shopping journey.	0.87
It is important that my friends' approval for using different channels interchangeably as needed on a particular shopping journey.	0.82
Omnichannel Shopping Intention (Cronbach's α = 0.85, AVE = 0.65, CR = 0.83)	
I intend to use different channels interchangeably as needed on a particular shopping journey.	0.82
I am likely to use different channels interchangeably as needed on a particular shopping journey.	0.83
In a near future, I plan to use different channels interchangeably as needed on a particular shopping journey.	0.77
Omnichannel Shopping Behavior (Cronbach's α = 0.77, AVE = 0.53, CR = 0.77)	
I purchase products using different channels interchangeably as needed on a particular shopping journey.	0.75
I utilize different channels interchangeably as needed to complete	0.74
I usually use different channels interchangeably on a particular shopping journey.	0.70

Note: Model Fit→ Chi-square = 389.2; *df* = 137, *p*-value < 0.001; CFI = 0.94; RMSEA = 0.06; SRMR = 0.03; * All factor loadings significant at 0.001 level.

5.3 Structural Model and Hypotheses Testing

This study assessed the proposed research model and hypotheses using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The overall fit indices confirmed an acceptable model fit: x^2 = 546.9 with *df* of 144 and *p*-value < 0.001; RMSEA of 0.08; CFI of 0.90; and SRMR of 0.08. Table 2 shows the regression weights of the hypotheses and their P-values.

Table 2. Regression weights of hypotheses

Path	Estimate	Standard Error	Critical Ratio	P-value
H1: Attitude ← Consistency	0.17	0.10	1.78	0.075
H2: Attitude ← Seamlessness	0.56	0.12	5.43	0.001***
H3: Intention ← Attitude	0.77	0.06	12.92	0.001***
H4: Intention ← Subjective norm	0.22	0.03	4.89	0.001***
H5: Behavior ← Intention	0.63	0.66	10.13	0.001***

Note: ***Significant at the 0.001 level

Perceived channel consistency increased consumers' favorable attitudes toward shopping through an omnichannel option. However, this relationship was not statistically significant, rejecting H1. This result may be due to the fact that consumers tend to believe that online retailers offer a wider assortment and more competitive prices than offline retailers. Therefore, consumers may expect better deals online than at physical stores. Perceived seamlessness across channels increased millennials' and Gen Z consumers' attitudes toward omnichannel shopping, supporting H2. This result implies that consumers may feel confident about engaging in omnichannel shopping because they believe that the retailer can offer uninterrupted and smooth shopping transactions and

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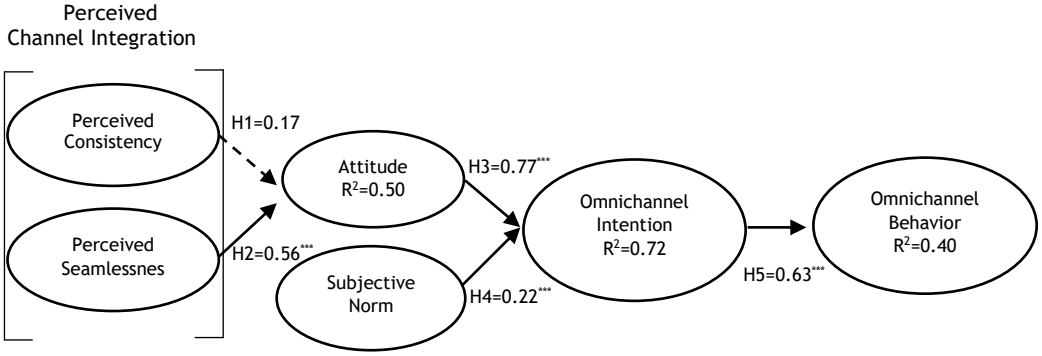
experiences even if they switch channels during shopping. Both attitude and subjective norms were positive indicators of millennials and Gen Z consumers' omnichannel shopping intentions, supporting H3 and H4. These younger generation consumers' intentions to engage in omnichannel shopping were a reliable predictor of their actual omnichannel purchase behavior, supporting H5. Figure 2 illustrates the significance of the identified relationships in the proposed research model.



Note: Model Fit→ Chi-square = 546.9; *df* = 144; *p*-value < 0.001; CFI = 0.90; RMSEA = 0.08; SRMR = 0.08; *** Significant at the 0.001 level

Figure 2. Results of research model and hypotheses

6. Discussion

Digital technology has rapidly transformed the retail business environment and consumer behavior. Today's consumers, especially younger generations, seek a multitude of touchpoints to communicate with retailers and switch channels freely during their shopping journeys (Sopadjieva et al., 2017). Retailers respond to these changes by introducing omnichannel retailing. Omnichannel retailers recognize the importance of channel integration and implement a well-operational omnichannel retail system by achieving channel consistency and channel seamlessness (Chen & Chi, 2021; Huré et al., 2017; Picot-Coupey et al., 2016; Saghiri, 2017; Shi et al., 2020; Verhoef et al., 2015). Surveying millennials and Gen Z consumers, this study found that channel seamlessness was an important factor that enhanced young consumers' positive attitudes toward an omnichannel shopping option. This study also found that consumers' attitudes and relevant others' opinions determined their intentions and actual use of the omnichannel shopping option.

Millennials and Gen Z have become the main consumer force in the marketplace, and understanding their behaviors is an imperative research topic. This study has joined the literature on these younger generations to understand their behaviors in the omnichannel retail environment. The findings provide valuable additions to the existing literature to identify what influences millennials and Gen Z consumers to engage in omnichannel shopping. This study also extends TRA to explain the relationship between intentions and behaviors in omnichannel retail. Understanding consumers' behavioral intentions effectively predict their behaviors (Pascual-Miguel, Agudo-Peregrina, & Chaparro-Peláez, 2015). While a meta-analysis has demonstrated that individuals' intentions only account for an average of 25 percent variance of the actual behavior (Sheeran, 2002), a higher percentage rate of intention for omnichannel shopping behavior was confirmed in this study's research model. The model explained 72 percent of the intention to engage in omnichannel shopping and 40 percent of its actual engagement. Thus, measuring and confirming actual behaviors in the omnichannel retail environment is a noteworthy step forward in consumer behavior research. In addition, the current study has introduced the concept of channel consistency and seamlessness as key components of channel integration and applied the concept to TRA. With the consideration of channel integration as an external factor influencing attitude, this study found that TRA provides a solid theoretical foundation to predict younger consumers' omnichannel shopping intentions and purchase behaviors.

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This study collected survey data from millennials and Gen Z as the younger generation consumer. While these two generations share similar characteristics researchers sometimes study them collectively for marketing purposes also display distinct features (Baykal, 2021; Cheung et al., 2018; Donnelly & Scaff, 2013; Jang, 2021; Kasasa, 2019). The separate data from each generation may yield different results and implications. A construct of channel consistency is another limitation of this study. This study used a single construct, which includes consistency in promotions, pricing, products, and services. Since consumers may perceive channels differently at different stages of their shopping journey and shopping context, separate constructs to measure channel consistency may provide a different perspective on consumers' perception of channel consistency in the omnichannel shopping environment.

7. Conclusion

Hypothesis 1 proposed that consumer perception of channel consistency improves their attitudes toward omnichannel shopping. Although perception improves attitudes positively, this study found no statistical significance between the two constructs. Hypothesis 2 postulated and confirmed that consumer perception of channel seamlessness was an important factor that enhanced young consumers' positive attitudes toward using online and offline channels as needed in a particular shopping journey. The implications of this study suggest that omnichannel retailers need to reevaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their different channels and revamp the channel strategies to create a seamless retail environment. Although designing channel consistency in every stage of the retail operation can be challenging, omnichannel retailers should support customers' shopping by providing consistent and seamless services, promotions, and information sharing regardless of the channel they use to initiate and complete shopping. In addition, the status visibility of orders, payment, inventory, delivery, and return across channels can improve customers' omnichannel shopping satisfaction.

The relationships among the constructs in TRA are also tested. This study found that consumers' attitudes (H3) and relevant others' opinions (H4) toward engaging in omnichannel shopping positively increased their omnichannel shopping intentions. Hypothesis 5 suggested that omnichannel shopping intentions and shopping through an omnichannel shopping option are correlated, and the current study validated the proposed relationship between the two constructs. People relevant or important to consumers and consumers' attitudes impact omnichannel purchase behavior. Therefore, omnichannel retailers must proactively manage social components as part of a customer's omnichannel shopping experience when implementing their omnichannel retail strategy.

8. Recommendation

Millennials and Gen Z have become the main consumer force in the marketplace, and understanding their behaviors is an imperative research topic. This study has joined the literature on these younger generations to understand their behaviors in the omnichannel retail environment. The findings provide valuable additions to the existing literature to identify what influences millennials and Gen Z consumers to engage in omnichannel shopping. This study recommends that retailers place importance on integrating their various channels to provide consistent shopping information and seamless shopping experiences to their customers. Retailers must also pay attention to social influences to promote their omnichannel strategies.

The study mentioned above limitations suggest directions for future research. For example, researchers could compare the attitudes and behaviors of millennials and Gen Z consumers in omnichannel shopping. The growing interest and importance of these younger generations as consumers and an in-depth and independent understanding of millennials and Gen Z independently would be a valuable contribution to the consumer behavior literature. Future research can also develop the multi-dimensional constructs of channel consistency and seamlessness to assess channel integration and apply it to investigate the consumers' shopping values, motivations, and behaviors in the omnichannel retail context.

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