

From Channels to Coherence: Omnichannel Retail and Customer Experience Across Industries

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Abstract

The era of Digitalization and technological innovations on a continuous basis has compelled various sectors to evolve with new practices. Focusing on the retail sector from these, this paper throws light on the innovations in the retail sector which had become the need of the hour for the retailers. Companies are trying to cope up these innovations by various strategies like integration of AR/VR in the practices, providing digital platforms, integration of offline and online channels, etc. All these practices have an aim to provide unified customer experience to the consumers that ultimately leads to consumer satisfaction. The study has an objective to systematically review the existing literature on the omnichannel perspective. For a concentrated study the broad area of Channel integration has been shrunked to selected themes like the customer journey and experience after the channel integration, apart from this the topic has been studied Industry wise focusing on sectors like eyewear, furniture and beauty. For these 50 research papers were reviewed out of which 37 were selected as per the selection criteria and important information was extracted for the purpose of study. Although the results show the emerging theme of omnichannel and its impact on the consumers with reference to specific sectors making it relevant for both retailers and the consumers, but still the quantitative aspect is missing as only secondary data is being worked upon.

Keywords: Omnichannel, Eyewear Sector, Beauty Industry, Furniture Sector, Consumer Journey

1. INTRODUCTION

Earlier the whole retail system was although operating with both online and offline channels but there was a prominent line that separated the two which somehow caused inconvenience for the consumers and also the retailers. The emergence of omnichannel concept has led to blurring these lines among different channels which has changed the face of retail industry. (Subramanian, R., & Bachhav, S. P. (2025)). This strategy has become a tool for the companies to gain competitive advantage among other prevalent players in the market. Companies are regularly interacting with their consumers through various means like websites, physical stores, mobile apps, social media, etc. Proper Coordination and integration of all these touchpoints leads to providing better shopping experience and the customer takes the brand as a cohesive entity. This synergy among the channels not only shapes the buying pattern but also leads to better brand loyalty and long term association of the brand with the consumers.

Today's consumer is much more knowledgeable due to the availability of the product details, substitutes available, fair pricing, etc. Due to the digitization, this important information is easily available to the consumer on his fingertips which helps in a more critical purchase and informed decision making by the consumers. The consumer choice regarding the channel choice during the purchase is dependent on various factors such as knowledge, accessibility and shopping orientation. But despite all the benefits provided by the omnichannel retailers still the consumers' decisions are based majorly on the demographics, for example the elderly consumers do not prefer the online browsing and purchasing the product and they still prefer buying from the brick and mortar pattern after physically experiencing and seeing the product, reason may be the limited technical usage or the lack of digital platform loyalty. (Van Delft, W. C. J. M. (2013)).

Although the channel Integration concept is in many industries but the research focuses on selected sectors of Beauty, Eyewear and Furniture. These sectors are those which are high involvement and therefore critical decision making sectors where the consumers require to physically try and view the products. To integrate digital platforms in these sectors must not have been an easy task and must have faced consumer resistance initially. But gradually with the technological advancements and the change in the preferences of the consumers in terms of buying decision, the transformation was adapted by the consumers and the retailers. Artificial Intelligence played a major role in making the process smoother by providing features such as virtual try on, chatbots, personalized recommendations, etc. With the add on of these features the consumers gained confidence while making purchase decision and there was a reduction in the cognitive dissonance. This confidence in purchasing blended with the ease of consumers where they could buy at the convenience and comfort of their home led to a drastic shift in the purchase behaviour, buying frequency and brand trust. The retailers ultimately have better sales numbers and long term loyal customers. The insights gained

from this study provide academic depth and also give suggestions to the retailers in different industries for better consumer engagement.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the recent years the retail transformation in the form of omnichannel retailing has generated the interest both for the retailers and the researchers as well. The channel integration has a positive impact on both the customers and the retailer performance Gao, Melero & Sese (2020). Companies can better satisfy the customers by segmenting them on the basis of their buying behaviour and channel preferences. These categories are physical store reliant, website reliant and omnichannel customers. Based on the choice of the channel the marketing strategy and the customer relationship management varies. (Tueanrat, Y., Papagiannidis, S., & Alamanos, E. (2021).)

There are many factors that impact the purchase decision of the consumers even after the companies are providing the channel integration for the customer ease. The prominent factors include the convenient use of the system and the transaction security. Apart from this other factors like brand trust and retailer relation with the consumers had minor or no influence on the consumers buying behaviour. (Wieland, T. (2023)). Many researchers have analysed the impact of the cross channel integration sector wise. The eyewear sector where the market leader, lenskart has transformed the eyewear segment retail where inspite of the problems related to price and quality faced by the brand, it managed to beat the charts and capture the maximum share in the segment. Through channel integration the brand was able to bring a more customer centric approach in the market. (KAAKANDIKAR, D., Dashasahastra, M. N., Chopade, M. P., Brahmane, M. N., & Shirse, M. P. (2020).)

A recent study examined the effectiveness of customer engagement within an omni-channel retailing framework, using the prominent Indian beauty and cosmetics retailer, Nykaa, as a case study (Atre, H., & Prabhu, A. (2025)). The research was grounded in literature emphasizing the necessity for brands to create seamless and integrated experiences across digital and physical platforms to meet evolving consumer expectations and enhance loyalty. A quantitative study investigated the impact of Omni-channel Strategy, Online and Offline Integration, and key Influencing Factors on the overall consumer shopping experience within the beauty retail industry, specifically using Sociolla as a case study (Marino, G. (2018)). The research utilized primary data collected via an online survey distributed to Sociolla consumers to analyze these relationships.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The systematic literature review on Omnichannel Retail, a transformation of the retail sector employed the following research methodology: the selection of peer-reviewed articles that were published within the time frame of 2012 to 2025 and pertained to this subject matter. The research team employed academic database of Google Scholar, exploring topics such as omnichannel strategy, cross channel integration in retail, omnichannel in eyewear, furniture and beauty sector, the consumer journey in the omnichannel setting, etc. The selection process restricted papers to those written in English and specifically focused on the main topic of the paper. Thirty-seven research publications were identified and evaluated in total as per the selection criteria out of fifty papers studied.

The data extraction encompassed transformative retail strategies, , patterns, and adoption of cross channel integration strategies by various sectors and brands. The researchers performed thematic analysis in order to categorize recurring themes and ascertain significant obstacles, patterns, and competencies. The findings showed that the cross channel and the unified experience by the companies to the consumers impacted their decision making and purchase decision in a positive way which ultimately led to building long term relationship of the brand with the consumers. In addition, the methodology section addressed recommendations for future research, implications for organizations and leaders, and limitations acknowledged, including the omission of non-English articles.

4. DISCUSSION-

4.1 Word Clod Analysis

The emphasis and focus of the research undertakings can be seen in how often keywords are used. The fact that words like omnichannel;customer experience,Journey,marketing & integration showed up a lot in this case says that these ideas were given a lot of attention in the studies. These keywords show that the topic about channel integration in context of customer experience and overall journey leadership styles, in a global setting are gaining importance. A multidisciplinary approach is shown by the fact that the research studies cover the omnichannel stratregy with reference to various industries.

The use of keywords such as technology; online and digital show the transformations and the innovations in the retail industry. Another big topic of interest is decision, which definitely suggests that omnichannel retailing pattern enhances the decision making of the consumers.

Words like cosmetics, furniture, lenskart, ikea suggest the adoption of multichannel and the seamless integration of channels by various sectors. Also words such as consumer satisfaction, customer loyalty and consumer trust show that these transformations in retail have impacted the brand relations with the customers and mostly in a positive manner.

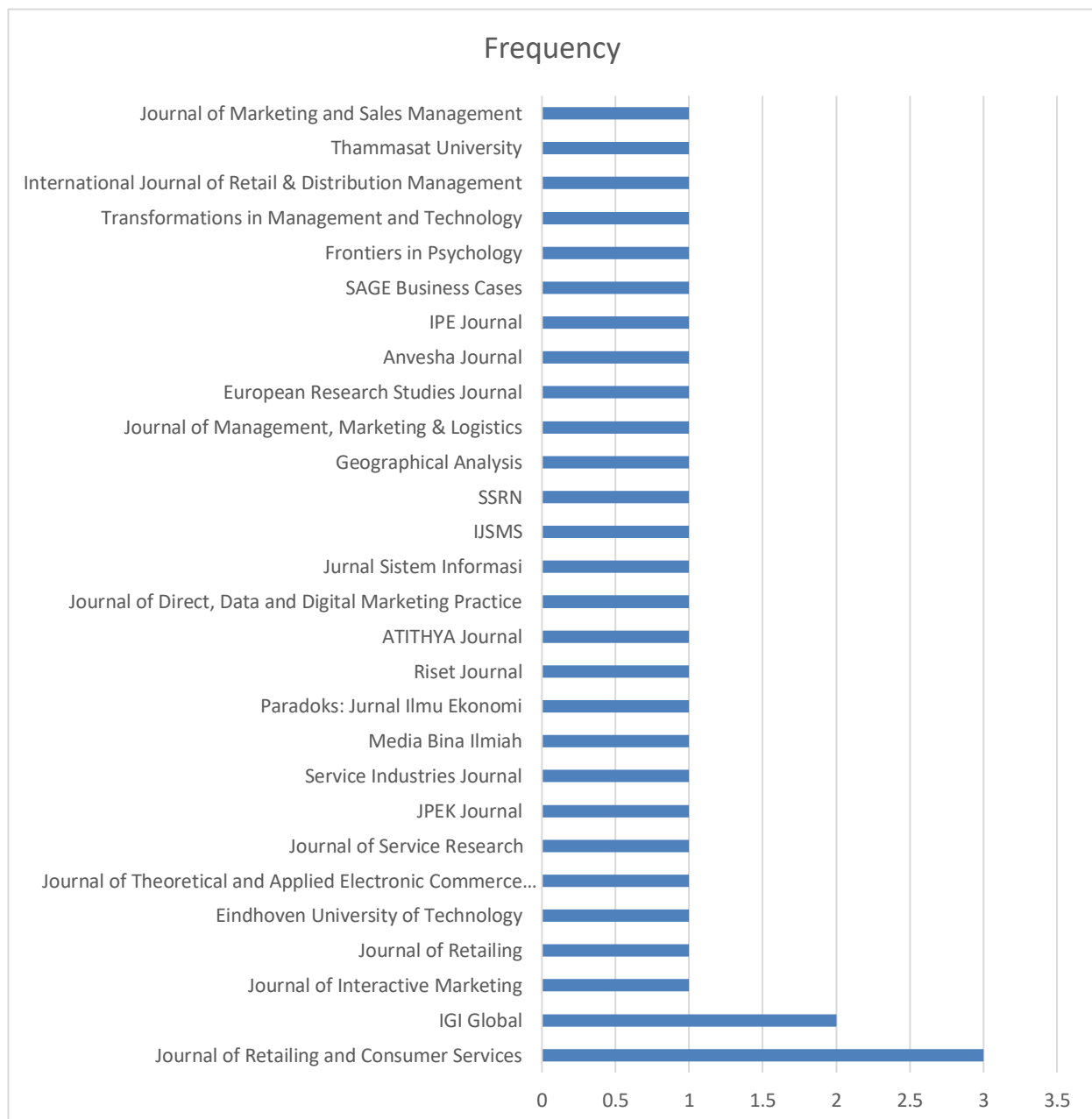


Figure 2- Frequency of Publication in various Journals

Source- Developed for the purpose of the study

The above graph (Figure 2) displays how many times papers about omnichannel retailing have been published in various journals. It is the Journal of Retailing and Consumer services that puts out the most, with 3 publications. The journal IGI Global has come out two times, and other journals like Journal of Marketing and Sales Management ,IJSMS, International journal of Retail & Distribution, SSRN, etc have come with one paper each of the focus area. This demonstrates that there is asignificant quantity of research being carried out and published in a variety of journals on the subject of Omnichannel Retailing .This is a reflection of the significance and interest that is being shown in this area of educational research. There have been not only research articles and review papers published in these journals but also some of the journals have supported and published case studies of various brands so that the academicians and the retailers can get brand specific practical insights as well regarding the research theme.

4.3 Trend Analysis

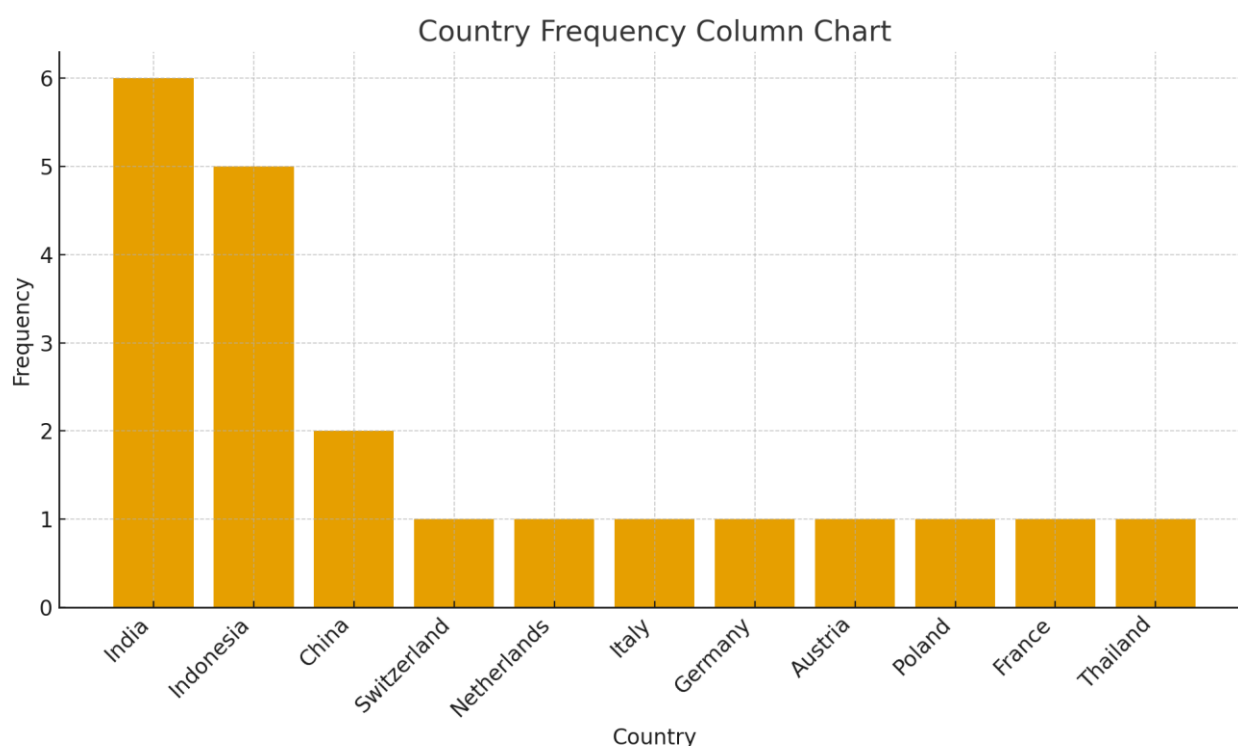


Figure 3- Frequency of Publication in various Countries

Source- Developed for the purpose of the study

The above graph (Figure 3) shows the researches on the transformation in retail in the form of omnichannel done in different countries. Major research has been done in India with maximum number of researches done, after this comes Indonesia with five research papers in different parts of the country. Apart from this in other countries like China, Switzerland, Netherlands, Italy, Germany, Austria, Poland, France and Thailand as well; the topic has been given importance and that is the reason the area has become of utmost importance for the retailers and the researchers also in these countries. This topic has gained importance in the recent years which is not only country specific but on a global level.

4.4 Frequency of publication

Over the course of the years, the frequency of publishing has exhibited a pattern of variation (Figure 4). The initial years 2013 and 2014 each saw the publishing of a single publication. The number of publications reached two in the year 2016 and remained the same in the year 2018. In the years that followed, the trend changed with the increased focus on the topic by the researchers. In the years 2020, 2021, 2022 the number of researches increased with more than four researches in each year. After this there was a drop in the years 2023 & 2024, but again in the year 2025 there was an immense increase in the number of publications in the omnichannel context.

Over the course of the years, the data reveals a pattern of fluctuation in the number of publications, with certain years exhibiting a higher level of activity than others.

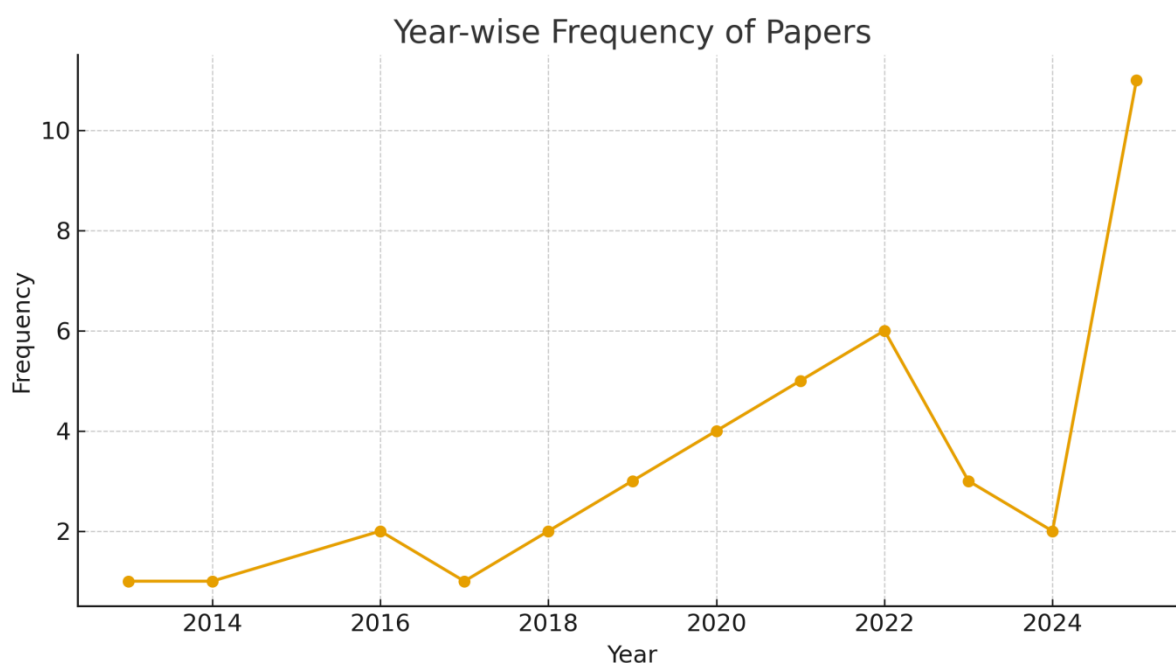


Figure 4 - Number of Publications

Source: Developed for the purpose of the study.

4.5 THEMATIC FOCUS

Table - A thematic center of focus as identified by studies

S.NO	THEME	PAPERS
1.	Omnichannel Customer Journey & Experience	Barwitz & Maas (2018); Cui et al. (2022); Tueanrat et al. (2021); Neslin (2022); Van Delft (2013); Gao & Jiang (2025); Gahler et al. (2023); Gasparin et al. (2022); Gao et al. (2020); Cook (2014).
2.	Omnichannel Beauty Retailing & Phygital Experiences	Purnamasari et al. (2022); Sari & Rosyadah (2025); Fernanda et al. (2025); Atre & Prabhu (2025); Mishra & Darshi (2025); Santoso et al. (2022); Rebière & Mavoori (2021)
3.	Hybrid & Omnichannel Furniture Retailing	Visser & Molin (2022); Wulandari & Jajuli (2022); Marino (2018); Siegfried (2021); Uddenfeldt (2014); Wieland (2023); Wieser & Yen (2019); Woźniakowski & Łaskiewicz (2024); Wongngan & Hsieh (2025); Agrawal et al. (2021); Mishra et al. (2019); Pärsson & Edlund (2021)
4.	Eyewear Omnichannel Integration & Digital Transformation	Rivero-Gutiérrez & Samino-García (2020); Frattini & Oliveto (2025); Roy & Paul (2023); Picot-Coupey et al. (2016); Ratanasirinrawoot & Patterson (2019); Rana (2024); Kaakandikar et al. (2020)

5. Discussion

Omnichannel Retail in the Beauty Industry

Beauty Industry has a differentiated feature where the consumers are highly involved and the experiential factor plays a major role. Not only this but this industry relies on consumer trust, brand goodwill and brand relationship with the customers. Omnichannel in the beauty sector involves the integration of brick and mortar stores, websites, social media channels, mobile applications for giving a seamless experience to the consumers. The empirical findings suggest that the integration of channels have brought a major shift in the sales and the growth of the sector. The major reason being the ease of decision making that the consumer gets with the help of channel integration.

Also the beauty sector which earlier experienced low sale on the online platforms because of the lack in validation of decisions and product trials which were only available in the physical stores. The Omnichannel strategy helped in gearing up the sales on the online platforms of the beauty brands by providing virtual try on to the customers which was possible at the ease and comfort of their home. Apart from this the chatbots and the personalized AI

recommendations provide a more inclusive and customer centric experience. In other words this bridge between the physical and online retail stores in the form of omnichannel strategy reduce the risk of buying thereby reducing the cognitive dissonance of the customers. This ultimately increases the confidence of the consumers in the products and the brands as they now have an option of pre evaluating the products before buying. After the emergence of omnichannel options by the brands, customers now have the option to browse the products that they require on the website and other digital platforms, after this they can check the reviews as well on online platforms, trying in the physical stores and then they have option to finally buy the product from the physical store or website or the mobile application.

Many beauty brands like Sephora, Nykaa, Loreal ,etc have adopted the omnichannel model and reshaped the meaning of beauty industry by giving the customers a blend of experiential physical stores and the comfort of ordering and virtually trying products at the comfort of their home. The result being very obvious that these brands after the adoption of updated and technology driven retail, have clearly noticed increase in the sales, better brand engagement and enhanced customer loyalty.

Omnichannel in Eyewear

In the eyewear industry, an omni-channel strategy is the integration of digital and physical touchpoints to solve the "fit and prescription" barrier. The focus is on the market leader - lenskart , It allows customers to move seamlessly from an online 3D trial to an in-person eye exam, ensuring a consistent and low-risk shopping journey. Using Augmented Reality (AR), customers can use their smartphone or laptop camera to see a 3D overlay of frames on their face. This reduces the cognitive dissonance and reduces return rates caused by poor choices. Apart from this the brand also gives a next level of convenience to the students by services like home try on and home eye checkup , where the companies send the certified optometrists to the consumers home with the required equipments and also for the frames try on , they also take along the frame options so as to provide the experience and trials of physical stores at the comfort of their homes. This transformation was never expected from an experiential and high involvement industry like eyewear. But by seamless integration of physical stores and digital platforms , brands have been able to build a coherent image with a great experience for the consumers.

In particular, the eyewear industry, a fast-growing market player that has a projected compound annual growth rate of 8.3% from 2024 to 2030, is among the industries leveraging omnichannel marketing

Omnichannel in Furniture

The furniture sector is a very high involvement and low frequency purchase segment, high ticket pricing bring one of the major reason for this. Furniture industry is the one where consumers prefer buying from physical setting store after carefully exploring all the alternatives, experiencing the comfort and quality and then finally purchasing the products. This makes it difficult for the furniture retailers to operate through online platforms , also it is

not easy for retailers to operate with an isolated approach in terms of channels. With the emergence of the cross channel integration, the strengths of physical stores that give the experience and the purchase validation and the convenience provided by the digital platforms; are blended to give a seamless experience to the consumers. Dominant players in the furniture market like Ikea and pepperfry have adopted this integrated strategy to give a better experience to the consumers. The integration of Artificial Reality (AR) has made this integration smoother by allowing consumers to virtually place the furniture with the help of their phone cameras while accessing the online platforms. This undoubtedly increases the confidence in buying, reduces the risk of buying expensive products without knowing dimensions of products, reduces returns and increases the customer loyalty and trust towards the brand.

6. Conclusion-

This study highlights the growing importance of omnichannel marketing as a strategic imperative for contemporary retail brands, particularly within the eyewear industry. As consumer expectations continue to evolve toward seamless, personalized, and consistent shopping experiences, the integration of online and offline channels has emerged as a key determinant of customer satisfaction, engagement, and loyalty. The findings reinforce that effective coordination across touchpoints enables brands to present a unified identity, reduce friction in the customer journey, and foster stronger brand–consumer relationships.

The review of existing literature demonstrates that omnichannel strategies significantly enhance customer experience by enabling flexibility in channel choice, improving convenience, and facilitating value co-creation throughout the customer journey. In the eyewear sector, the adoption of technologies such as virtual try-ons, data-driven personalization, and digitally enabled physical stores has played a crucial role in supporting omnichannel execution. These innovations not only address functional needs but also contribute to experiential value, thereby influencing purchase decisions and long-term brand preference. Furthermore, the study underscores that omnichannel implementation extends beyond technological integration and requires organizational alignment, data integration, and customer-centric strategy formulation. Brands that successfully synchronize their channels are better positioned to respond to changing consumer behaviors and competitive pressures in a rapidly digitizing retail environment. However, the literature also points to challenges related to channel conflict, data privacy, and operational complexity, indicating the need for strategic planning and continuous adaptation.

In conclusion, omnichannel marketing represents a sustainable pathway for growth and differentiation in the eyewear retail sector. By delivering cohesive and personalized experiences across touchpoints, brands can enhance customer value and achieve competitive advantage. Future research may empirically examine consumer responses to specific omnichannel touchpoints, explore the role of emerging technologies, and assess omnichannel effectiveness across diverse retail contexts and markets.

7. Limitation & Future Scope-

Although the research provides indepth insights about the cross channel integration and its impact on the consumers focusing the specific industries . Still the research has certain limitations which can be studied in further studies by the researchers. Firstly the research is based on the qualitative aspect, the primary data that could have led to quantitative analysis is missing. Secondly the research is specifically for industries of eyewear, beauty and furniture which limits the generalization of the study to the whole retail sector. Further studies should be after considering these gaps and may be longitudinal studies can be conducted to see the difference in the sales numbers before and after the adoption of omnichannel retail strategy. Apart from this a wider study with review of more papers and with a wider area in other countries should be done to have a holistic view of the subject. More studies should be conducted taking into consideration the other retail sectors and a single study covering all the retail sectors that have adopted the cross channel integration can also be done.

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