

# A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW ON OMNICHANNEL CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IN THE RETAIL SECTOR

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## ABSTRACT

*This study presents a systematic literature review (SLR) on omnichannel consumer behavior in retail, synthesizing insights from 47 peer-reviewed articles published between 2020 and 2025 and indexed in the Scopus database. The primary objective is to understand how consumers behave across integrated physical and digital retail channels, what factors influence their engagement, and how retailers respond to evolving expectations. The review methodology follows the PRISMA framework, employing both qualitative thematic synthesis and bibliometric analysis using VOSviewer software. Key findings reveal six dominant themes: integrated customer experience, personalization, channel-switching behavior, trust and loyalty, technology adoption, and post-pandemic shifts in consumer priorities. The bibliometric visualization indicates an increasing scholarly focus on data-driven strategies and technological transformation in omnichannel contexts. While the literature emphasizes personalization and seamless integration, notable research gaps remain—particularly concerning emerging markets, long-term strategic outcomes, and the role of social media. This review offers a comprehensive foundation for future research and provides actionable insights for practitioners aiming to build competitive, consumer-centric retail strategies in a dynamic and digitally driven environment.*

**Keywords:** *consumer behavior, omnichannel retailing, personalization, technology adoption, retail strategy*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The contemporary retail environment is undergoing a profound transformation driven by the increasing integration of digital technologies and the evolving expectations of modern consumers. Traditional distinctions between online and offline retail have begun to blur, giving rise to omnichannel retailing—a strategic approach that seamlessly integrates various channels to create a cohesive and personalized shopping experience (Asmare & Zewdie, 2022a; Rahman et al., 2025). As consumers increasingly expect fluid transitions between digital and physical platforms, retailers are compelled to adopt omnichannel strategies to remain competitive and responsive to these demands. This paradigm shift is not merely a technological transition but reflects a deeper evolution in consumer behavior, purchasing patterns, and brand interaction across multiple touchpoints (Park & Kim, 2022; Pereira et al., 2023; Rahman, Carlson, Gudergan, et al., 2022).

Omnichannel retailing entails more than simply offering products through multiple platforms. It involves synchronizing physical stores, e-commerce sites, mobile apps, and social media to ensure that consumers experience continuity and consistency regardless of their chosen channel (F. Gao & Su, 2017; Rahman, Carlson, & Chowdhury, 2022). Today's consumers are not

only channel-agnostic but also highly discerning—they compare prices online while browsing in stores, seek real-time assistance on social platforms, and expect in-store pickup for online purchases (Baldivia & Chowdhury, 2025; Kencebay & Ertugan, 2025). These behaviors highlight a demand for seamless interactions, fast service, and personalized experiences that traditional retail models are often ill-equipped to deliver (Baldivia & Chowdhury, 2025; Merlano et al., 2024). The growing dominance of this consumer-centric model underscores the urgent need for retailers to innovate, adapt, and reimagine their engagement strategies (Asmare & Zewdie, 2022a; Ingriana, Chondro, et al., 2024; Kencebay & Ertugan, 2025; Mulyono, Hartanti, et al., 2024).

Despite widespread adoption of omnichannel strategies, understanding the intricacies of omnichannel consumer behavior remains a complex and underdeveloped domain within retail scholarship. Existing literature is fragmented, often focusing on isolated components of the consumer journey, specific technologies, or individual channels rather than adopting a holistic perspective (Cheah et al., 2022; Sombultawee & Wattanatorn, 2022). Consequently, there is a pressing need to synthesize existing knowledge to better understand how consumers behave across channels, how their expectations evolve, and how retailers can design systems that accommodate and influence these behaviors (Juaneda-Ayensa et al., 2016; Lopes et al., 2022). Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has added new dimensions to consumer expectations, with heightened preferences for safety, convenience, and digital access reshaping how consumers approach shopping across all channels (Chen & Chi, 2021a; Hossain et al., 2020; Nigam et al., 2023).

This systematic literature review seeks to fill that gap by aggregating and critically analyzing existing research on omnichannel consumer behavior. Unlike traditional literature reviews, which often adopt a narrative or thematic approach, a systematic literature review employs a transparent, replicable methodology to identify, evaluate, and synthesize relevant studies. This ensures a comprehensive and unbiased account of the research landscape, helping scholars and practitioners alike understand both established findings and emerging areas of inquiry (Ahmad, 2024; Lawry & Bhappu, 2021; Yao et al., 2023). As omnichannel retailing becomes a staple strategy among global retailers, a systematic understanding of consumer behavior within this context is both timely and necessary (Maha et al., 2024; Rolando & Ingriana, 2024; Wigayha et al., 2024).

The decision to undertake this review is further justified by the growing body of empirical and conceptual studies in recent years that explore various facets of omnichannel retailing, including consumer decision-making, personalization, logistics, data analytics, and channel integration (Blom et al., 2017; Lopes et al., 2022; J. Zhang et al., 2018). However, these studies often vary in scope, methodology, and theoretical grounding, leading to an inconsistent understanding of the field (Rahman, Carlson, & Chowdhury, 2022; Theocharis & Tsekouropoulos, 2022). By systematically examining this body of work, we aim to consolidate fragmented insights, identify key themes, discern evolutionary patterns, and uncover critical gaps that merit further exploration. This consolidation is essential not only for academic clarity but also for guiding retail practitioners in crafting strategies that align with the realities of omnichannel consumer behavior (Alexander & Kent, 2022; Barbosa & Casais, 2022; Cheah et al., 2022b).

The overarching objective of this review is to provide a comprehensive synthesis of the literature on omnichannel consumer behavior in retail settings.

### **1.1 Research Questions:**

1. What are the key characteristics and trends of omnichannel consumer behavior as discussed in the literature?
2. What factors influence consumer decision-making and engagement across multiple channels?
3. What theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches have been employed in studying omnichannel consumer behavior?
4. What are the major research gaps and opportunities for future studies in this area?

These questions serve to orient the review and ensure a focused yet comprehensive examination of the topic.

In conducting this review, we delimit our scope to studies that examine consumer behavior within an explicitly omnichannel retail context. This includes research that investigates integrated shopping experiences across physical and digital channels, explores cross-channel consumer journeys, and evaluates technological and strategic enablers of omnichannel engagement (Baldivia & Chowdhury, 2025; Kencebay & Ertugan, 2025). Studies that focus exclusively on single-channel retailing or do not explicitly consider cross-channel integration are excluded. Furthermore, our review encompasses peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, and empirical studies published within the last decade, reflecting the contemporary nature of omnichannel developments (Ingriana, 2025; Widjaja, 2025; Zahran, 2025). While global in scope, we pay particular attention to studies with high relevance to digitally mature and rapidly developing retail markets, where omnichannel strategies are most prominently deployed (Balbín Buckley & Marquina Feldman, 2024; Pereira et al., 2023; Sombultawee & Wattanatorn, 2022)

The significance of this review lies in its potential to contribute to both academic knowledge and practical retail strategy. Academically, it offers a structured synthesis of a rapidly evolving field, highlighting theoretical contributions, methodological innovations, and substantive findings (Cotarelo et al., 2021; Theocharis & Tsekouropoulos, 2022; Trenz et al., 2020). It also provides a roadmap for future research by identifying underexplored areas and suggesting new directions for inquiry. For practitioners, the review offers actionable insights into consumer expectations, channel integration strategies, and the design of personalized experiences (Juaneda-Ayensa et al., 2016; Lawry & Bhappu, 2021). It underscores the importance of data-driven decision-making, seamless technological integration, and cross-functional collaboration in delivering value to omnichannel consumers (Merlano et al., 2024; Rahman et al., 2025)

This review also holds implications for broader discussions on retail innovation and digital transformation (Tan & Alexia, 2025; Wigayha et al., 2025; Winata & Arma, 2025). Omnichannel consumer behavior reflects a convergence of trends—technological advancement, increased digital literacy, and shifting lifestyle preferences—that are reshaping the foundations of retail (Nigam et al., 2023; Rahman, Carlson, Gudergan, et al., 2022). Understanding how consumers navigate this landscape enables more effective resource allocation, better customer relationship management, and enhanced competitive agility (Alexander & Kent, 2022; Baldivia & Chowdhury, 2025). Moreover, it reinforces the growing role of personalization, trust, and experiential value in shaping consumer loyalty, especially in post-pandemic retail environments where adaptability and resilience are paramount (Chen & Chi, 2021a, 2021b; Nigam et al., 2023)

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. Following this introduction, the Methodology section outlines the systematic procedures adopted to identify, select, and analyze relevant literature, including the inclusion and exclusion criteria, search strategies, and analytical frameworks (Pereira et al., 2023; Sombultawee & Wattanatorn, 2022). The Results section presents the key findings from the reviewed studies, organized into thematic categories that reflect the current state of research on omnichannel consumer behavior. The Discussion section interprets these findings, linking them to broader theoretical and practical implications while identifying gaps and future research directions (Lazaris et al., 2022; Putri & Setiawan, 2025; Savastano et al., 2019). Finally, the Conclusion summarizes the major insights, restates the significance of the review, and offers concluding reflections on the future of omnichannel consumer research and practice (Khalid, 2024; Zhang et al., 2024).

Through this structured and comprehensive review, we aim to advance scholarly understanding and practical engagement with omnichannel consumer behavior, providing a foundational reference for researchers, strategists, and decision-makers navigating the evolving retail landscape (Barbosa & Casais, 2022; Cheah et al., 2022)

**2. RESEARCH METHOD**

This study adopts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach, guided by the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework to ensure methodological transparency, rigor, and replicability. The SLR method allows for a comprehensive and unbiased evaluation of existing literature concerning omnichannel consumer behavior within retail contexts.

To enhance both depth and breadth of analysis, this review integrates qualitative thematic synthesis and quantitative bibliometric analysis using VOS viewer software. This dual-method strategy enables the identification of key research themes, trends, co-occurrence of keywords, and influential clusters in the field.

**2.1 Research Design**

The literature search was conducted exclusively through the Scopus database, selected for its robust indexing of peer-reviewed journals in business, management, marketing, and information systems. The search aimed to identify articles that address consumer behavior in the context of omnichannel or multichannel retailing. To ensure the inclusion of current and relevant studies, the publication window was limited to the years 2020 through 2025. This time frame was strategically chosen to reflect recent technological advancements, shifts in consumer behavior, and the retail transformations triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The search strategy was developed using Boolean logic to combine relevant keywords and phrases. The core search string included variations such as “*omnichannel*,” “*multi-channel*,” and “*cross-channel*,” paired with “*consumer behavior*,” “*shopping behavior*,” and “*customer engagement*,” as well as context-specific terms like “*retail*” or “*retailing*.” The searches were executed in the title, abstract, and keyword fields to ensure a focused yet inclusive retrieval of relevant documents. Additional filters were applied to restrict results to English-language publications and to journal articles with full-text availability, thereby excluding book chapters, dissertations, and conference proceedings. Studies that dealt exclusively with backend logistics, internal IT systems, or non-retail contexts were also removed from consideration, as they fall outside the scope of consumer behavior analysis.

**2.2 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

To refine the corpus of literature, a clear set of inclusion and exclusion criteria was applied during the screening process. Articles were included if they met all of the following conditions: they were published between 2020 and 2025, written in English, categorized as peer-reviewed journal articles, provided full-text access, and examined consumer behavior in an omnichannel or multichannel retail context. Both empirical and conceptual papers were considered, provided they contributed to the understanding of consumer experiences, motivations, or behaviors across integrated retail channels.

Conversely, articles were excluded if they fell outside the defined time frame, were not published in English, or lacked a clear focus on retail-related consumer behavior. Non-research items such as editorials, book reviews, conference abstracts, and dissertations were also excluded. Furthermore, studies that addressed only technical infrastructure, supply chain logistics, or organizational IT without reference to consumer interaction were removed, as they did not align with the behavioral focus of this study.

These criteria are further summarized in Table 1, which outlines the boundaries that guided the literature selection and ensured thematic consistency throughout the review.

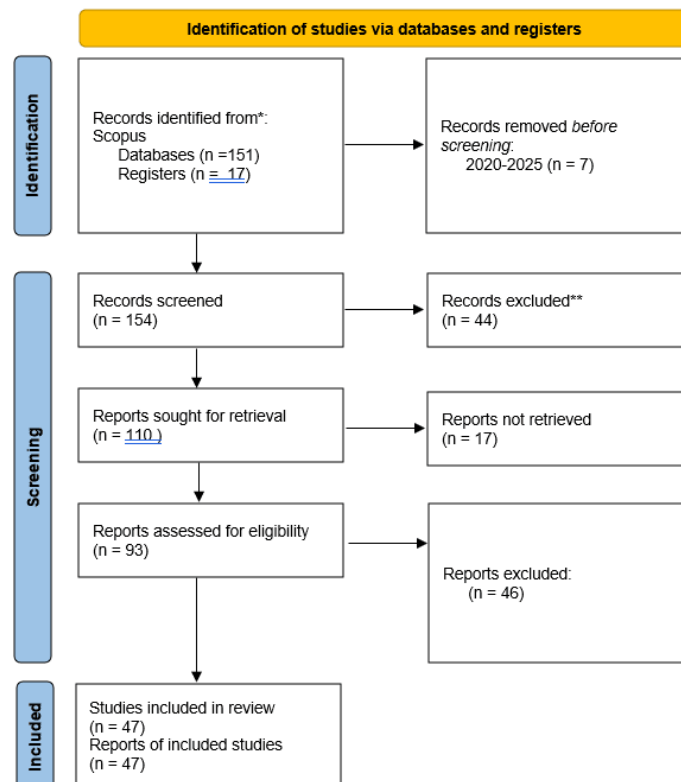
**Table 1.** Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
<b>Publication Year</b>	2020 – 2025	Before 2020 or after 2025
<b>Language</b>	English	Non-English publications

<b>Article Type</b>	Peer-reviewed journal articles	Conference papers, book chapters, dissertations, editorials
<b>Content Focus</b>	Consumer behavior in omnichannel or multichannel retailing	Logistics, IT systems, or non-retail topics
<b>Access Type</b>	Full-text available	Abstract-only or paywalled with no access

### 2.3 Study Selection Process

The selection process followed the PRISMA guidelines, beginning with the identification of relevant records from Scopus. After exporting the initial search results, duplicate records were identified and removed using reference management software. The remaining articles were subjected to a two-step screening process. First, titles and abstracts were reviewed to eliminate studies that did not meet the inclusion criteria. Second, full-text versions of potentially eligible articles were retrieved and assessed for final inclusion. This rigorous screening process resulted in the selection of 47 articles, which formed the foundation of the analysis. The overall flow of the study selection process is illustrated in the PRISMA diagram (Figure 1), which maps the progression from identification to final inclusion.



**Figure 1.** PRISMA Flow Diagram of Study Selection Process  
*Source: Authors' own work*

### 2.4 Data Extraction and Analysis

A structured data extraction process was undertaken to collect and organize information from each of the 47 selected studies. For each article, key variables were documented, including the names of authors, year of publication, journal title, geographic and market focus, methodological approach,



theoretical framework, and principal findings. This information was compiled into a standardized matrix to facilitate comparative analysis.

The extracted data served two primary functions. First, it allowed for the identification of publication trends, methodological patterns, and dominant research themes. Second, it provided the foundation for the thematic synthesis and bibliometric mapping. By systematically organizing the findings across diverse contexts and approaches, the study was able to trace how various aspects of omnichannel consumer behavior have been conceptualized and empirically studied.

### **2.5 Quality Assessment**

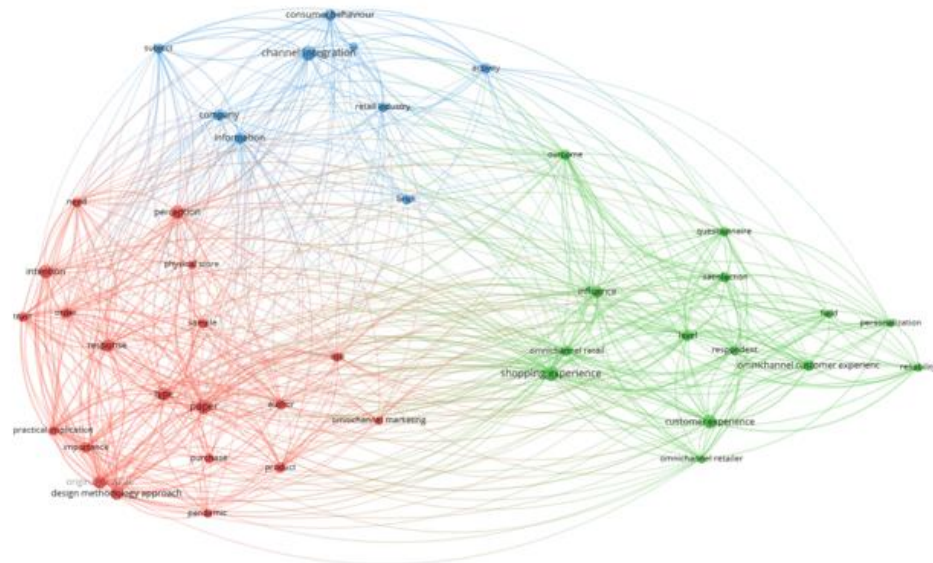
To ensure the inclusion of high-quality studies, a quality assessment protocol was applied using a customized version of the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT). This evaluation considered the clarity of research objectives, the appropriateness of the study design, the rigor of data analysis, and the relevance of findings to the central research questions. Only those studies that met a satisfactory standard across these dimensions were included in the final analysis. This step was critical in maintaining the academic rigor of the review and ensuring that the synthesized insights are grounded in robust research.

## **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **3.1 Bibliometric Analysis Results**

The overlay visualization generated using VOSviewer offers temporal insights into the evolution of keywords related to omnichannel consumer behavior. In this visualization, the color gradient represents the average publication year of documents associated with each keyword, ranging from earlier years in blue to more recent studies in yellow. The prominence of terms such as “digital transformation,” “personalization,” and “channel integration” appearing in lighter shades indicates that these topics have gained increased attention in recent years, reflecting their growing importance in contemporary retail strategies (Cotarelo et al., 2021; W. Gao et al., 2021; Merlano et al., 2024). In contrast, foundational terms like “consumer behavior,” “omnichannel retailing,” and “customer satisfaction” appear in darker tones, suggesting that these have been established areas of inquiry earlier in the literature (Mulyono, Ingriana, et al., 2024; Park & Kim, 2019; Pereira et al., 2023; Rahardja et al., 2024; Yao et al., 2023). This progression illustrates a thematic shift in the field, where the research focus has gradually moved from general conceptual frameworks to more technology-driven and data-centric approaches. The overlay visualization thus highlights the dynamic nature of omnichannel research and underscores emerging priorities within the academic discourse (Lawry & Bhappu, 2021; Lopes et al., 2022; Novikov et al., 2022; Rolando et al., 2025).

To identify the intellectual structure and conceptual landscape of omnichannel consumer behavior research, a bibliometric analysis was performed using VOSviewer software. The analysis focused on keyword co-occurrence across the selected articles, generating a network visualization map that illustrates the frequency and relationships between key terms used in the literature.



**Figure 2.** VOS viewer Network Visualization of Keyword Co-Occurrence  
*Source: Authors' own work using VOS viewer*

The network map consists of several clusters, each represented by a different color, which highlight thematic concentrations within the research corpus. The red cluster encompasses core keywords such as "omnichannel retailing," "consumer behavior," and "shopping experience." This cluster captures foundational studies focused on the evolution of consumer behavior in integrated retail environments. These articles often explore how consumers interact with various channels and what factors influence their cross-channel behavior. The green cluster includes terms like "customer satisfaction," "trust," and "service quality," representing studies that investigate the outcomes of omnichannel strategies on customer perceptions, brand evaluation, and loyalty. This cluster suggests a strong focus on post-purchase experiences and how seamless service integration can enhance customer relationships (Jin et al., 2025). The blue cluster is associated with technology-oriented keywords such as "digital transformation," "personalization," and "technology adoption." Research within this cluster emphasizes the enabling role of technological infrastructure and analytics in shaping consumer experiences across multiple platforms. Finally, the yellow cluster groups keywords such as "channel integration," "purchase intention," and "retail strategy," indicating a managerial perspective on the planning, coordination, and execution of omnichannel approaches. These studies provide insight into how retail organizations align strategy with consumer expectations and operational realities (Mulyono & Rolando, 2024; Nuraini et al., 2024; Rolando & Winata, 2024).

The keyword network reveals that omnichannel research is inherently multidisciplinary, involving contributions from fields such as consumer psychology, retail marketing, information systems, and strategic management. Highly interconnected terms like "customer journey," "channel switching," and "mobile commerce" demonstrate the centrality of understanding consumer pathways in shaping effective omnichannel strategies (Ingriana, Gianina Prajitno, et al., 2024).

### **3.2 Thematic Synthesis of Findings**

Beyond bibliometric patterns, a thematic synthesis of the selected articles identified six dominant themes that reflect current scholarly perspectives and practical concerns in omnichannel consumer behavior. A recurring theme in the literature is the necessity of providing a seamless and integrated customer experience across all retail touchpoints (Alexander & Kent, 2022; Pereira et al., 2023; Rahman, Carlson, Gudergan, et al., 2022). Consumers expect uniformity in branding, pricing, product availability, and customer service, regardless of the channel they engage with. Studies

emphasize that inconsistencies between online and offline experiences can lead to consumer frustration and diminished loyalty (Park & Kim, 2022; Rolando, 2024; Shao & Lassleben, 2021). The integration of digital tools and physical services, such as enabling online ordering with in-store pickup or returns, is highlighted as a key strategic advantage (Ingriana, Hartanti, et al., 2024; Rolando & Mulyono, 2024; Rolando & Wigayha, 2024).

Another significant theme relates to the importance of personalization and data-driven engagement (W. Gao et al., 2021; Merlano et al., 2024; Park & Kim, 2022). Personalization is identified as a critical driver of customer satisfaction in omnichannel contexts. Many studies discuss how retailers use data analytics and artificial intelligence to understand consumer preferences and behavior across different platforms. This data-driven approach allows for tailored recommendations, customized promotions, and proactive customer support, which enhance user experience and foster deeper consumer engagement (Rahman et al., 2025; Shao & Lassleben, 2021; Yang & Zhang, 2020).

Consumers frequently switch between channels during their shopping journey, and this behavior is influenced by factors such as convenience, product availability, pricing, and contextual relevance (Park & Kim, 2019; Sombultawee & Wattanatorn, 2022). The literature highlights that the ability to move fluidly between physical and digital environments significantly influences purchase decisions. Understanding the motivations behind channel switching is essential for retailers aiming to design frictionless experiences and reduce points of consumer abandonment.

Trust also emerges as a foundational element for sustained consumer engagement in omnichannel retail (Asmare & Zewdie, 2022; Baldivia & Chowdhury, 2025). Retailers that maintain transparency in operations, ensure data privacy, and deliver consistent service quality are more likely to retain loyal customers. Several studies underscore the importance of trust in facilitating cross-channel continuity and reducing perceived risks associated with digital interactions (Cotarelo et al., 2021; W. Gao et al., 2021; Khalid, 2024).

Technology adoption and organizational readiness constitute another major theme in the literature (Alexander & Kent, 2022; Rahman, Carlson, Gudergan, et al., 2022). Effective omnichannel execution depends not only on the availability of technology but also on an organization's capacity to implement and scale those technologies strategically. Research in this area discusses the importance of leadership commitment, employee training, and cross-departmental coordination in overcoming resistance to digital transformation. Retailers that exhibit high levels of technological agility are better positioned to adapt to evolving consumer expectations (Balbín Buckley & Marquina Feldman, 2024; Fernandes et al., 2024; Sharma et al., 2025).

Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the shift toward digital engagement and redefined consumer priorities (Asmare & Zewdie, 2022b; Chen & Chi, 2021b; Nigam et al., 2023). Studies note that consumers now place greater value on safety, convenience, and contactless experiences. This shift has pushed retailers to reevaluate and redesign their omnichannel strategies, emphasizing features such as curbside pickup, virtual consultations, and improved digital interfaces to meet new consumer demands (Lawry & Bhappu, 2021; Lazaris et al., 2022).

### **3.3 Summary of Trends and Research Gaps**

The review highlights several notable trends in the field (Asmare & Zewdie, 2022a; Kencebay & Ertugan, 2025). There is a growing convergence of physical and digital (Theocharis & Tsekouropoulos, 2022; Yao et al., 2023) channels into a unified customer experience, with increasing emphasis on personalization and data-driven decision-making. Research also shows heightened interest in trust-building mechanisms and consumer loyalty programs that span across channels (Kencebay & Ertugan, 2025; Merlano et al., 2024).

However, certain research gaps remain underexplored. There is limited empirical evidence on how omnichannel strategies affect consumers in emerging markets, where infrastructure and digital literacy vary widely (Ahmad, 2024; Asmare & Zewdie, 2022b; X. Zhang et al., 2024b). Moreover, long-term evaluations of omnichannel effectiveness—particularly beyond initial implementation—



are scarce. Finally, the influence of social media and user-generated content as components of the omnichannel experience warrants further investigation, especially considering their impact on consumer trust and decision-making (Fernandes et al., 2024; Jin et al., 2025; Sharma et al., 2025).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This systematic literature review offers a comprehensive synthesis of scholarly research on omnichannel consumer behavior in retail, drawing insights from 47 peer-reviewed articles published between 2020 and 2025. The findings reveal that the evolution of omnichannel retail is driven by consumer expectations for seamless, personalized, and consistent experiences across both digital and physical platforms. Through bibliometric and thematic analyses, the study highlights six dominant themes: integrated customer experiences, personalization, channel-switching behavior, trust and loyalty, technology readiness, and the influence of post-pandemic shifts.

The bibliometric results illustrate the growing academic attention on technology adoption, personalization, and channel integration in recent years. Meanwhile, thematic synthesis underscores the importance of trust-building and organizational agility as key enablers of effective omnichannel implementation. Retailers are increasingly challenged to harmonize their service delivery across platforms while responding to consumer needs for personalization, convenience, and security.

Despite these advancements, the review identifies several gaps in the literature, including limited research on emerging markets, long-term effectiveness of omnichannel strategies, and the role of social media and user-generated content. These gaps provide promising directions for future research.

In practical terms, this review offers actionable insights for retail practitioners seeking to design effective omnichannel strategies. It emphasizes the need for data-driven decision-making, technology integration, and customer-centric design to ensure long-term consumer engagement. As the retail landscape continues to evolve, the integration of theoretical knowledge and real-world application becomes essential for sustaining competitive advantage and customer loyalty.

The review also highlights the importance of collaborative, cross-functional retail models that align technological investments with consumer behavior insights. Future research should explore dynamic consumer journeys, adaptive retail systems, and the intersection of omnichannel retail with other emerging trends such as AI, sustainability, and immersive commerce. By continuing to investigate these evolving dimensions, scholars and practitioners can collectively shape a more responsive, innovative, and inclusive retail ecosystem. Retailers aiming to remain competitive must prioritize channel integration, leverage data for personalization, and cultivate trust across platforms. These insights contribute to a deeper understanding of consumer expectations in a digital-first era and offer direction for both future research and practical retail innovation.

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