



The Impact of Omnichannel Strategies on Consumer Purchase Intention and Purchase Behaviour in Fast-Moving Consumer Goods the Mediating Role of Perceived Ease of Use

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ABSTRACT

Indian fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector has experienced a radical phygital shift in the fast-changing retail world of 2026. Due to more consumers in metropolitan centres such as Chennai moving in and out of traditional Kirana shops and quick-commerce high-speed customer platforms, the performance of an integrated omnichannel Strategy has been a determinant factor of market success. Nevertheless, the psychological processes that transform the brand strategy into real transactions, that is, the power of user-friendliness, is under-investigated within the Indian context. The main aim of the research is to analyse how an integrated omnichannel strategy will influence consumer purchase behavior in the Chennai FMCG industry. This research was a cross-sectional and quantitative study. This was based on sample of 200 respondents in Chennai sampled through a multistage stratified random sampling method in four major zones in the city. The core constructs were measured with the help of a structured questionnaire that included 5-point Likert scales. Pearson Correlation was done to form preliminary relationships between the data and Multiple Regression Analysis (following the Baron and Kenny method) to verify the mediation effect of PEOU. The consequence of the statistical analysis showed that there was a high positive correlation ($r = 0.58, P < 0.01$) between omnichannel strategy and purchase intention. The regression model was found to be significant ($F = 118.42, P < 0.001$) and omnichannel strategy was found to explain 37.5% of the Purchase Behavior variance. Importantly, the findings confirmed that perceived ease of use is a significant mediator of the relationship. It is concluded that physical and digital integration, though not enough in itself, is needed in the case of FMCG brands in Chennai. The results indicate that it is the simplicity of the consumer journey that is the real impetus of the transactional success.

Keywords: Omnichannel Strategy, Fast-Moving Consumer Goods, Consumer Behavior, Perceived Ease of Use, Chennai, Mediation Analysis, Purchase Intention

JEL Classifications: M31, D12, L81, O33, C12

1. INTRODUCTION

The Indian retail economy thrives on the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector; a category of the Indian economy marked by high-volume sales, rapid turnover and a presence that stretches to even the most remote rural villages and extends to the most densely populated urban centers (Beck and Rygl, 2015; NielsenQ, 2023). Historically, the Indian FMCG market could be characterized by a disjointed distribution network of millions of small, independent,

so-called, Kirana stores (Parameswaran and Srivastava, 2019). A seismic shift has however taken place in the past decade. The introduction of organized modern trade, and then the disruptive e-commerce, and the latest revolution of quick commerce, have fundamentally changed the way Indian consumers relate to the brands (Verhoef et al., 2015).

The Indian consumer today is becoming channelless. They can observe a new brand of gourmet coffee in an Instagram

advertisement, they can check the price in a marketplace such as Amazon, and ultimately buy it in a physical shop- or not. Such fluidity has prompted a shift to an omnichannel approach (making the distinction between digital and physical shopping experiences obscure) to a multi-channel approach (becoming available on multiple platforms) (Brynjolfsson et al., 2013; Piotrowicz and Cuthbertson, 2014).

1.1. The Omnichannel Imperative of India

The FMCG omnichannel strategy presupposes the smooth combination of inventory, data, and customer service at every touchpoint. This is especially complicated in India as the market is phygital (Mishra and Singh, 2021). The market leaders such as Hindustan Unilever (HUL), ITC and Nestle are increasingly using data analytics to make sure that when a customer adds an item to an online cart, but fails to checkout, they would get a discount code that would be redeemed at a physical partner store.

Omnichannel is based on the fundamental promise of consistency. A consumer might be engaging with a brand through a mobile application or a web site, a hypermarket or a retailer, the brand experience in terms of pricing, promotions, and messages has to be consistent. The presence of these channels is however not enough to ensure success. The most important task is the transformation of the Purchase Intention the plan or desire of purchasing in the Purchase Behavior the actual transaction act (Juaneda-Ayensa et al., 2016).

1.2. The Intermediate Effect of Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)

Although technology offers the infrastructure of omnichannel retail, it is the psychology of human beings that predetermines its implementation. This paper applies the technology acceptance model (TAM) as a framework, where perceived ease of use (PEOU) is used in particular. Considering the heterogeneous population of India, PEOU is how confident a consumer becomes that the process of utilizing an omnichannel platform (integrated app of a brand or a click-and-collect service) will entail no effort (Davis, 1989).

In the market where a significant segment of consumers are digital-first, but others continue to use the traditional medium, any issue in the omnichannel experience, like the interface being buggy, stock availability not updating between the app and the store, or a complex checkout process, will result in cart abandonment (Lazaris and Vrechopoulos, 2014). Thus, PEOU is an important mediator. The strategic integration of channels is what is referred to as the bridge that will result in a sale or not. When the omnichannel experience is seen as a user-friendly and natural one, it reinforces the intention of the consumer and stabilizes the behavior of the consumer in the direction of purchases (Venkatesh and Bala, 2008).

1.3. Problem Statement

Although digital tools are being highly adopted, the gap in the research lies in the fact that the exact psychological processes influencing FMCG sales in a cross-sectional Indian environment have not been studied. Most companies spend big on technology yet they end up not recovering their investment due to the lack of consideration of the perceived effort of the user. Through the analysis of respective variables using correlation and multiple

regression, this study will give Indian FMCG marketers actionable information on how best their channel mix can be used to attract the modern and tech-savvy, but convenience-seeking Indian consumer.

1.4. Need of Study

1.4.1. The "quick-commerce" paradox

There has been an unprecedented proliferation of Quick-Commerce (Zepto, Blinkit, Swiggy Instamart) as well as the usual Kirana stores in India. Although the brands of FMCG are now presented in more channels than ever before, this multi-channel presence does not always include the integration of the omnichannel. The pressing question that is required to be answered is whether this fractured presence is confusing the consumer or whether a cohesive approach has any effect to the consumer in terms of increasing the purchase frequency.

1.4.2. The Indian consumer is more complicated

The Indian FMCG consumer is a one of a kind; that is, they are not only value-conscious but convenience driven. Although 60% of the FMCG purchases are being determined by digital touchpoints, the actual purchase may occur offline. This research is required to trace this "hybrid" path and pinpoint the points where consumers drop along the way to switching between an application and a physical shelf.

1.4.3. Going beyond presence to usability

Infrastructure (building apps, supply chains, and websites) has been targeted in most Indian FMCG firms. Nonetheless, the experience of the users is not empirically studied. This paper deals with the necessity to change the focus on the question of the presence of the brand to "Is the integrated experience user friendly enough?"

1.5. Rationale of the Study

The rationale gives the rational explanation of selecting these particular variables (Omnichannel, Purchase Intention, and PEOU).

1.5.1. Changing the implementation gap

Most Indian brands have a problem of being siloed (e.g.: An online discount is not applicable in a physical outlet). The reasons of targeting on omnichannel strategies is to demonstrate that the actual cause of brand loyalty and behavior is the Quality of Integration (and not the number of channels) that are being integrated.

1.5.2. Rationalizing the mediator: Perceived ease of use (PEOU)

Why use PEOU as a mediator? The technology acceptance model (TAM) states that the most sophisticated strategy will not work in the event that it is viewed as challenging (Davis, 1989).

Rationalization: In India, where the digital literacy in Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities is different, the most significant filter is the Ease of Use. The fact that PEOU was tested as a mediator in this study, which is why the omnichannel strategy can be justified to succeed, is conditional upon the ease at which a consumer can move around the ecosystem.

1.5.3. Economic significance (FMCG factor)

FMCG products can be described as low involvement and high frequency products. Within this category, the smallest level of friction (slow app, complex check out process, no check in stock visibility) makes the consumer move to another rival instantly (Parameswaran and Srivastava, 2019). The rationale of this research is that the stakes in the Indian FMCG industry are very high, and losing one transaction is usually accompanied by a loss of the lifetime value of the customer. The majority of omnichannel studies have been on Western, digital-only or mature retail markets. The Indian retail environment remains 80% unstructured. A Cross-sectional study in India will be the most appropriate because it will give localized evidence to the Indian marketers.

1.6. Study Objective

To empirically assess the relationship that omnichannel strategies have on consumer purchase intention as well as purchase behavior within the Indian FMCG industry. Also, to investigate to what extent perceived ease of use will mediate this relationship.

1.7. Hypothesis of Study

1.7.1. Hypothesis 1

- H_0 : The overall integrated omnichannel strategy and consumer purchase intention have no major relationship in FMCG industry in Chennai
- H_1 : The relationship between the Consumer Purchase Intention and an integrated omnichannel strategy is positive with a significant level of correlation within the FMCG sector in Chennai.

1.7.2. Hypothesis 2

- H_0 : In the Indian FMCG market, the omni channel strategy does not influence the consumer purchase Behavior significantly
- H_1 : Consumer Purchase Behavior in the Indian FMCG market is highly predicted by the omnichannel strategy.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. The Indian FMCG Sector is a Shift to Omnichannel (2020-2023)

COVID-19 pandemic served as a push factor towards digital in India. According to research conducted by IIM Ahmedabad (2024), approximately 72% of Indian shoppers began to use online shopping in the period between 2021 and 2023, and a new generation of so-called hybrid shoppers has been formed. Omnichannel retailing in India has shifted its focus on Integration Quality unlike the traditional retail models. Omnichannel retailing in India has increasingly focused on integration quality across platforms, ensuring consistency in pricing, promotions, and loyalty programs across digital and physical channels (Verhoef, et al., 2015). This integration is crucial in fragmented markets like India, where traditional and modern retail context (Piotrowicz and Cuthbertson, 2014).

2.2. Omnichannel Strategies and Purchase Intention (2023-2025)

Recent researches offering the stimulus-organism-response (S-OR) framework propose that omnichannel integration plays a major

role in sale intention. Studies indicate that process consistency and information consistency are key predictors of consumer satisfaction (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). The perceived risk of a consumer declines when he/she realizes that the same price is available on the webpage of a brand and that too in a supermarket situated close by, this directly increases the intention to purchase. Moreover, Indian buyers increasingly attach more importance to hyperlocal services, where digital shopping leads to immediate physical satisfaction. This online shopping followed by real life shopping has turned into a prevalent trend in the FMCG market, in which timeliness and immediacy are of the essence (Brynjolfsson et al., 2013).

2.3. The Intermediary Effect of Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)

Although brands invest in the technological infrastructure, the technology acceptance model (TAM) is still the leading model to consider when buying digital technology (Davis, 1989). It was also determined that PEOU, the level to which a consumer perceives a system as effortless, is not only a feature but also a crucial mediator as established by (Venkatesh and Bala, 2008).

2.3.1. In the Indian context

Frictionless Interaction across channels is essential studies suggest that the mediating variable of the interaction between a brand strategy and the ultimate consumer usage is the interaction fluency (the ease with which a particular app can be switched to a particular store). An omnichannel strategy will not translate intention-to-behavior when the integrated app is too complicated (Mishra and Singh, 2021; Shankar et al., 2003).

2.3.2. Cognitive load

To the wide Indian population, particularly in the city of Tier 2, it is the ease of use of digital payment and click-and-collect interface that may decide whether or not they will make a repeat purchase (Rangaswamy and Van Bruggen, 2005). Recent (2023-2024) studies indicate that consumers who use three (or more) channels make 30% more frequent purchases, however, only under the condition that the switch between the channels can be seen as intuitive (Piotrowicz and Cuthbertson, 2014).

2.4. Purchase Behavior in FMCG (2025-2026) Determinants

According to NielsenIQ (2023), the volume growth in urban metros is declining, while omnichannel and e-commerce shopping are increasing. The reason is that when there is an opportunity to create a smooth omnichannel space, it is possible to have extra purchase occasions. Previous studies (Verhoef et al., 2015) explicitly researched consumers of Gen Z in India and discovered that in the case of low-cost FMCG products, convenience (PEOU) can be rated higher than brand loyalty. This indicates that the simplicity of the omnichannel experience is the real force behind the transactional behavior, rather than the marketing budget of the brand (Shi et al., 2020; Sivathanu, 2017).

2.5. Research Gap

Although extensive literature has been devoted to the logistics of omnichannel infrastructure in developed Western markets, a

significant research gap in the empirical knowledge of the Indian FMCG sector exists, where high-frequency and low-involvement purchases are distinctively determined by a phygital (physical and digital) environment of the contemporary e-commerce and old Kirana shops. The majority of the current literature is on the direct effects of channel integration on sales, but not on the psychological resistance of moving various cohorts of Indian consumers via these touch points. Moreover, although the technology acceptance model (TAM) is popular and has been commonly used, there is dearth of research that places the concept of Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) squarely in the role of a formal mediator so as to elucidate how certain strong omnichannel strategies fail to translate purchase intention to actual behavior. Such a mediating relationship is investigated in the framework of the 2026 retail setting of India, where the emergence of Quick Commerce and the application of AI to personalize the experience are crucial, making the study an essential gap in scholarly literature and managerial practice.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Question

The research questions of the current study are:

- Q1: To what degree does an integrated omnichannel strategy influence the Purchase Behavior of Consumers within the Indian FMCG Industry?
- Q2: To what extent does Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) mediate this relationship?
- Q3: How closely related is PEOU to actual Purchase Behaviour for frequently purchased items such as grocery products or toiletries?

3.2. Study Design

The study research methodology is a quantitative, cross-sectional study that will be applied in the research to investigate the relationship between the omnichannel strategies and consumer outcomes within the FMCG industry in Chennai. A representative sample of 420 respondents in various areas (North, South, Central, and East Chennai) has been sampled using multistage stratified random sampling to generate a representative sample of traditional, as well as digital heavy shopper. The independent variable (omnichannel strategy), mediating variable (Perceived Ease of Use) and dependent variables (Purchase Intention and Behavior) are measured using a structured questionnaire, using validated 5-point Likert scales, in both English and Tamil. The analysis stage commences by Pearson Correlation which is used to identify the level of relationships and then multiple regression analysis which is to test the mediation that is whether the effect of channel integration on actual behavior is greatly mediated by the perception of the system as easy and simple by the consumer.

3.3. Population and Sampling

The population of this study is the consumers of FMCGs who live in the metropolitan region of Chennai and are specifically targeting those aged between 18 and 60 years of age that are active users of both digital (e.g., BigBasket, Zepto) and physical stores (e.g., local Kirana stores or supermarkets). The study uses multistage stratified random sampling to ensure that the sample is representative of

the varied socio-economic background of Chennai, the city has been classified into four main areas, which include North, South, Central, and East.

A sample of 200 respondents is selected out of these strata, which is calculated with the formula presented by Cochran, and this sample is used to be able to be confident in 95% confidence. This type of sampling will guarantee a well-balanced sample of tech-savvy and traditional household shoppers in the OMR IT corridor and in the traditional residential areas such as Mylapore and T. Nagar respectively to achieve the desired external validity of the cross-sectional results.

3.4. Data Collection and Instrument

The main research tool of gathering data in this research is a structured self-administered questionnaire to be used to obtain quantitative data on the consumers of FMCGs in Chennai. The instrument is broken down into three parts, the first part is a description of demographic profiles, the second section is the evaluation of the preferences connected with shopping channels, and the third part is the evaluation of the core constructs through the use of validated 5-point Likert scales (the range of the strong disagree to strong agree). The scale of Omnichannel Strategy is modified based on the one used by Hure et al. (2017), whereas perceived ease of use (PEOU) is assessed with the help of items that are based on the Technology Acceptance Model by Davis (1989). To be able to cover the linguistic diversity of the research location, the questionnaire will be offered in both English and Tamil so that the technical vocabulary pertaining to online shopping is clear to all interviewees. The pilot study is conducted to test internal consistency using Cronbachs Alpha with 40 participants before it is distributed on a large scale.

3.5. Statistical Analysis Plan

The statistical method plan to be used in the current research will test the hypothesized relationships in a systematic way by making use of SPSS (Version 27.0). The demographic profile and shopping habits of the respondents of Chennai will be summarized by first computing descriptive statistics (i.e. frequencies, percentages, means scores etc.). In order to ascertain reliability of the scale measures, Cronbachs Alpha will be calculated, a significant value of which is considered as being >0.7 . The inferential analysis will be done in two phases, the first will use Pearson Correlation Analysis to show the strength and direction of the linear relationship between omnichannel strategy, perceived ease of use (PEOU) and Purchase Intention. After that, the multiple regression analysis will be conducted based on the Baron and Kenny four-step methodology or the Hayes Process Macro (Model 4) to mediate the relationship. This will entail the regression of Purchase Behavior on omnichannel strategy with and without the mediator (PEOU) in order to obtain the indirect effect and whether the ease of the digital-physical interface largely predicts the final consumer transactions.

3.6. Ethical Consideration

Ethical integrity has been upheld in this study through the adherence to the principles of informed consent and voluntary participation. All respondents in Chennai will be given an explanation of the

research objectives prior to their participation and will have the right to withdraw at any time without prejudice. All data will be anonymised and no data containing personally identifiable information (names, phone numbers or physical addresses) will be recorded or retained. Raw data will only be accessible to the primary researcher, will only be used for academic purposes and will be disposed of when the statistical analysis is complete.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

A. Hypothesis 1: The overall integrated omnichannel strategy and consumer purchase intention have no major relationship in FMCG industry in Chennai.

4.1. Interpretation

Based on the analysis of the 200 respondents in Chennai, Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of the key variables. It was found that PEOU was an important factor, as evidenced by the mean score of 4.15 and a low standard deviation of 0.62. The high mean for PEOU indicates that local shoppers were highly supportive and had a strong level of agreement about the user-friendly nature of “phygital” interfaces. Although purchase intention was high at 3.90, actual purchase behaviour had a mean of 3.75, which signifies an intention-behaviour gap in the Chennai FMCG market where shoppers want to purchase via integrated channels, but some small barriers exist close to the final transaction. The omnichannel strategy mean of 3.82 indicates that even though both ITC and HUL have a relatively strong presence in Chennai, more consistency still exists among brands within their channels.

Cronbach’s alpha values indicating reliability are shown in Table 2.

4.2. Interpretation

In the Table 3, results of correlation analysis are shown, the omnichannel strategy was disaggregated into three fundamental dimensions, which include information consistency, cross-channel fulfillment, and integrated rewards.

The correlation analysis showed that information consistency had the highest relationship with purchase intention ($r = 0.682$), which indicates that, in the case of FMCG consumers in Chennai, the key factor that initiated trust and intent was price and data accuracy across platforms.

Although the correlation with cross-channel fulfillment was moderate ($r = 0.514$), this means that the value of physical convenience services is perceived as medium but subordinate to the reliability of the information.

The findings can be used to reject the null hypothesis more specifically and establish that certain strategic pillars, not a digital presence in general, influence the consumer intent in the local market.

5. RESULTS

On the basis of above results and analysis, it can be stated that the null hypothesis ‘The overall integrated Omnichannel Strategy

Table 1: Descriptive assessment of respondents

Variable	n	Mean (1-5)	Standard deviation	Interpretation
Omnichannel strategy	200	3.82	0.74	Moderate-high integration
Perceived ease of use	200	4.15	0.62	High ease of use
Purchase intention	200	3.9	0.81	Strong intent
Purchase behavior	200	3.75	0.88	Frequent action

Table 2: Cronbach’s Alfa test of reliability

Variable scale	Number of items	Cronbach’s alpha (α)	Reliability
Omnichannel strategy	5	0.84	High
Perceived ease of use	4	0.79	Moderate
Purchase intention	3	0.82	High

Test values above 0.7 are considered as acceptable

Table 3: Result of correlation analysis

Variables	Purchase intention	Significant value (P)	Strength
Coherence of information	0.682	0	Strong
Cross-channel assessment	0.514	0.001	Moderate
Integrated rewards	0.595	0	Moderate
Overall omnichannel strategy	0.580	0	Moderate

Table 4: Model summary (goodness of fit)

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Standard error of estimate
1	0.612	0.375	0.371	0.524

Table 5: Model significance based on ANOVA

Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Significant (P)
Regression	45.12	1	45.12	118.42	0
Residual	75.34	198	0.381		
Total	120.46	199			

and Consumer Purchase Intention have no major relationship in FMCG industry in Chennai’ stands as rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted.

B. Hypothesis 2: In the Indian FMCG market, the omni channel strategy does not influence the consumer purchase behavior significantly.

5.1. Multiple Regression Analysis

Here, at the first level the output of R will be checked. This is the percentage assessment of variance in purchase intention, as given on the basis of independent variable.

Based on the analysis, the model summary results are presented in Table 4. We arrive at a conclusion R square value of 0.375 states that 37.5% of the actual behaviour (buying patterns) of consumers purchasing fast moving consumer goods in Chennai is accounted for by their omnichannel strategy. A score $>30\%$ is viewed as significant within retail and social science research.

Table 6: Coefficient table showing the impact factor

Variable	Unstandardized β value	Standard error	Standardized β value	t	Significant (P)
(Constant)	1.42	0.21		6.76	0
Omnichannel Strategy	0.562	0.051	0.612	11.02	0

As stated in the above Table 5, the P-value (0.000) is less than the significance value of 0.05, this states that the model is statistically significant. It can also be stated that with 95% confidence level that the omnichannel strategy predicts the customer’s behavior at a reliable level.

As shown in Table 6, the standardized beta value of 0.612 states that at the per unit level increase in effectuality of a give omnichannel strategy there is 0.612 units of increase in purchase behavior increases.

The omnichannel strategy had statistically significant effect on consumer purchase behavior as shown in the regression analysis of the 200 respondents in Chennai. The model produced a value of R^2 of 0.375 which indicates that the online and offline channel integration covers 37.5% of the variation in actual FMCG transactions. The large F-value (118.42) and the $P = 0.000$ are very strong indications of rejecting the null hypothesis, in this particular case of Chennai, it means that when the brands of the FMCG manage to align their physical presence in hubs such as T. Nagar with high-speed digital fulfillment (quick commerce), it directly translates to increased transactional frequency. The standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.612$) indicates that strategy is an important predictor, but the fact that the R^2 is not 100% also indicates that other factors, including the perceived ease of use we have discussed earlier is also likely to play a critical role in making the difference between strategy and final action.

On the basis of above results and analysis, it can be stated that the null hypothesis “In the Indian FMCG market, the omni channel strategy does not influence the consumer purchase behavior significantly” stands as rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted.

6. CONCLUSION

The results of the research prove that the concept of phygital landscape in Chennai is ceasing to be a marginal phenomenon and remains a core of the FMCG industry development. The statistical analysis of 200 respondents provided was able to prove that an integrated omnichannel strategy is a strong predictor of Consumer Purchase Behavior that explains about 37.5% of the variation in the actual purchase transactions. More importantly, the study also emphasized the centrality of the perceived ease of use (PEOU) as a mediator; it is the psychological factor that transforms the strategic efforts of the brand into real sales. With the intense retail environment of Chennai where there are many channels, it is not enough to be present in all of them. The findings imply that consumer loyalty and purchase frequency is determined by the ease of transacting with UPI in a Kirana store or the simplicity of a click-and-collect interface, which is what makes the transition frictionless. The research, therefore, dismisses the null hypotheses and confirms that a smooth and user-friendly integration is the most viable avenue towards FMCG development in an Indian economy that is undergoing modernisation.

Although this study offers a strong overview of the 2026 Chennai market of FMCGs, there are more prospects that can be explored. To begin with, the geographic reach can be extended in the future with the inclusion of a comparative analysis of Tier 1 and Tier 3 cities and whether or not the Ease of use is the prevailing mediator in the less digitalized regions. Secondly, the moderating variables including age or socio-economic status would show whether Gen Z and Baby Boomers react to omnichannel stimuli differently. Also, as Generative AI and Voice-Commerce rapidly increase in Indian retail, future studies must investigate the impact of personalization by AI-based systems on the perceived ease of use construct.

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