

THE IMPACT OF OMNICHANNEL RETAILING ON CONSUMER DWELL TIME WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE FASHION INDUSTRY IN WESTERN PROVINCE, SRI LANKA.

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ABSTRACT

The omni-channel approach is a novel strategy that aims to deliver seamless experience to customers across both online and physical channels. In omnichannel retailing, all customer touchpoints are integrated to ensure consistency. When companies implement an omni-channel strategy, they aim to engage the same customers across different channels by delivering a unique and cohesive experience. The purpose of this research study is to explore the impact of omni-channel retailing on consumer dwell time, with particular reference to the fashion industry in the Western Province of Sri Lanka. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to 384 respondents in the fashion sector. This study focuses on the dimensions of omni-channel integration, seamlessness, Fulfilment, and usability. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis to fulfil the research objectives and test the hypotheses. The majority of respondents were female, aged 26–35, held diplomas or bachelor's degrees, and were employed in the private sector. Descriptive analysis indicated high favorability towards omnichannel retailing dimensions. Correlation analysis revealed significant positive correlations between omni-channel integration, seamlessness, and usability and consumer dwell time. However, omni-channel fulfilment showed a non-significant correlation, suggesting that the speed or accuracy of fulfilment may not directly influence dwell time. The reason for this non-significant finding may be that consumers prioritize synchronization and ease of transitioning between online and in-store channels over quick or accurate order fulfilment when it comes to dwell time. Although fulfilment is essential to customer satisfaction, it may not directly contribute to extended engagement within a store. Regression analysis shows that 85% of the variation in customer dwell time is explained by the level of omni-channel retailing, with the model being statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). These findings indicate that omni-channel retailing has a strong impact on consumer dwell time within stores. The study's generalizability is limited by its focus on the Western Province and the fashion industry. Additionally, the data collection method, primarily using self-reported questionnaires, may have introduced a response bias. Future research should expand to other regions and industries, consider additional variables, such as customer satisfaction and loyalty, and incorporate more diverse data collection methods, including observational data and qualitative interviews, to capture a broader view of consumer behavior.

Keywords: Consumer dwell time, Omni-channel fulfilment, Omni-channel integration, Omni-channel retailing, Omni-channel seamlessness, Omni-channel usability.