

## Omnichannel Strategy in Increasing Customer Satisfaction Post Covid-19 in Automotive Industry



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**ABSTRACT:** COVID-19 has plagued the auto industry for the past two years. The automotive ecosystem is currently being hit by problems stemming from three main forces, namely competition, advances in digital technology, and increasingly advanced consumers. With so many choices on the market, it can be difficult to know where to start let alone make the right choice. The answer lies in the omnichannel experience. This study aims to highlight the critical factors for the successful incorporation of an omnichannel strategy. This research is a type of quantitative research to verify the theories that have been made through different tests and information handling. The population used in this research is Daihatsu car consumers at PT. Asco Prima Mobilindo East Java. The sampling technique used in this study was to use a probability sampling technique of 120. The results showed that the ability to provide services in the form of an integrated customer experience through different channels can have a positive impact on the level of car consumer satisfaction or it could be that the company is able to recognize, fulfilling and satisfying consumer needs very well so that consumer expectations and expectations can be achieved. The results of the two studies found that a natural, seamless, and sustainable cross-channel experience felt by car consumers also gave a very positive signal towards increasing the level of satisfaction felt by consumers.

**KEYWORDS:** Omnichannel Strategy, Integrated Interaction, Perceived Fluency, Customer Satisfaction

### I. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered various sectors to evaluate and adapt to the massive changes that have occurred both in terms of digital transformation, consumer behavior and market changes, one of which is the automotive company. The automotive ecosystem is currently being hit by problems stemming from three main forces, namely competition, advances in digital technology, and increasingly advanced consumers. These three strengths can provide new opportunities for business model innovation and customer engagement. Automotive companies need to consider new retail models and update distribution channels to enter the market (Boutellier and Heinzen 2014). To stay competitive, car dealers need to pay attention to their technology infrastructure.

Technological innovation accelerates disruption across the global automotive industry (Rajan et al. 2017). Buying a car can be an emotional experience for consumers. With so many choices on the market, it can be difficult to know where to start let alone make the right choice. The answer lies in the omnichannel experience. By implementing an omnichannel automotive experience, companies can break down barriers between channels and bridge the digital and physical worlds to create an experience that is flexible enough to personalize each customer's car buying journey to suit one's needs, where the client starts using not just one of the available interaction channels. but all of them, often simultaneously (Lazaris and Vrechopoulos, 2014). The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated digital transformation which has directly or indirectly changed consumer behavior in transactions (Matthews et. al, 2021). Trends are constantly changing and to meet consumer expectations, retailers are making greater efforts to shift from a multi-channel strategy to an omni-channel that offers an integrated seamless experience of channels. The core goal of omnichannel is to provide customers with consistent service to get the same experience regardless of whether they buy online or offline. The aim of omni-channel retail is to enhance the customer experience (Kang et al., 2019).

The omnichannel concept is relevant because this term emphasizes joint action across multiple access channels so that an integrated and consistent experience is provided to meet customer needs (Lazaris et al. 2021) (Shen et al. 2018). According to the Digital Divide study (2017), automotive is the third most digitally influenced purchase, after electronics and home furnishings. Developing an omnichannel sales approach has become important to keep the company competitive. Developing an omnichannel sales approach is essential to staying afloat in the competitive landscape. Well-adapted companies and car

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dealers will not only serve their customers better, but can also reduce marketing costs. Omnichannel uses multiple channels to build awareness and engagement, ultimately driving customers to dealers to complete their journey. Customer satisfaction is one of the success factors for the company. With the widespread use of smartphones worldwide, retailers have adopted many innovative and disruptive new retail business models. Digitalization is bringing the retail business into a new era and has profoundly and positively impacted business strategy. Customer satisfaction is a feeling of pleasure, entertainment, enjoyment and pleasure during a shopping trip. According to (JamilaElAzhari and DagBennett 2015) , customer satisfaction is obtained from the overall customer experience throughout their shopping journey, starting from product search, research, making purchasing decisions, and receiving after-sales service from retailers. Customer satisfaction is an overall and holistic customer measurement of products or services in meeting and fulfilling customer expectations. The company has tried many efforts to increase customer satisfaction through an omnichannel retail strategy. The use of technology and digital processes has enhanced the shopping experience for customers. Omnichannel retail strategies have been widely introduced into business models and company policies to enrich the customer shopping experience (Waldron, 2018).

An experimental study by (Lazaris et al. 2021) shows that in operating physical stores, accommodating comparisons of multiple omnichannel configurations, increasing the level of omnichannel integration positively affects customer satisfaction and loyalty intentions. The impact of increased levels of omnichannel integration on customer satisfaction and loyalty intentions is more pronounced among consumers who perceive channels as complementary and for consumers with a goal-directed shopping orientation. Customer satisfaction has been identified as the main predictor of positive customer behavior. The relationship between satisfaction and positive behavior has been confirmed repeatedly by several researchers (Anderson and Srinivasan 2003) ; (Venkatesh, Thong, and Xu 2012). Satisfaction is understood as an ongoing evaluation inherent in the consumer experience, and satisfied consumers are more likely to develop closer relationships and more likely to take steps to strengthen dependence on the company.

(Hamouda 2019) found that a high quality of omnichannel integration increases customer loyalty and perceived value from omnichannel. In the omnichannel context, that loyalty is the result of a cognitive rather than an affective process between the customer and the company. (Reydet and Carsana 2017), emphasized that there is a positive influence of experience (positive affect experience) leading to positive behavior, such as loyalty to the company. (Morrison and Crane 2007) proved in their study that clients' emotions are the basis of their decisions regarding future consumption choices and brand loyalty. Providing a positive customer experience means increased sales, customer loyalty and profits for the brand concerned. Srivastava and Consumer experience in customer loyalty and concluded that loyalty can start with a positive experience from consumers. The successful synchronization and integration of physical stores and online channels plays an important role in the omnichannel strategy to ensure and increase customer satisfaction and loyalty to the brand. Personalized services, offers and advertising are key factors that enhance customer service experience and customer satisfaction (Tyrväinen, Karjaluo, and Saarijärvi 2020), which then creates positive word of mouth and increases customer purchase intentions and returns. Retailers should use omnichannel to increase customer satisfaction and combine their online and offline environments to provide customers with a unified, seamless and enjoyable shopping experience in physical or online stores. Companies are obligated to maintain and cultivate online relationships with customers. Relationships facilitated by new technologies, social media and big data are critical to managing and influencing customers to provide personalized experiences to increase customer satisfaction.

Omnichannel retail completely transforms an organization's core competency to integrate its distribution and supply chain. The omnichannel strategy helps increase sales (Malinowska, 2019). The recent report on ecommerce sales published by Statista reveals the extraordinary development of ecommerce worldwide. Global e-commerce growth started in 2014, while digitization has been introduced intensely to the retail market. Another research conducted by GlobalData (2020) shows that the e-commerce market recorded growth of 24.7% compared to 2019. This increase was mainly due to the Covid-19 pandemic which caused a lot of consumer buying behavior to shift from offline to online which has accelerated the growth of e-commerce. However, only a few studies have integrated their online business with physical stores to harness its power to increase sales by increasing customer satisfaction. Therefore, this research is important to discuss the factors that influence omnichannel retailing from customer perceptions about increasing satisfaction from convenience, enjoyment, comfort, and trust. This research highlights the critical factors for the successful incorporation of an omnichannel strategy. Based on the background above, the main problem to be solved through this research is to determine an effective omnichannel marketing strategy amidst the digital transformation of the automotive market. The purpose of this study is to test whether the integrated interaction channel, perceived fluency in the omnichannel strategy significantly affects customer satisfaction. This research is expected to provide new perspectives in designing relevant marketing strategies in the midst of digital transformation in the automotive market and provide recommendations and implementation opportunities for the development of an omnichannel marketing strategy in the automotive market in various segments.

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## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Omnichannel

Organizations must change their traditional business models, which have been in operation for more than several decades, and transform to adapt to trends (Llopis-Albert, Rubio, and Valero 2021). Producers, salespeople and consumers will also be affected and interact and communicate with each other. Face-to-face interactions are decreasing, the use of technology is getting stronger, so that consumer behavior leads to a mix of online and offline. Omnichannel involves more channels as well as makes different channels interact with each other. (Verhoef, Kannan, and Inman 2015) define omnichannel management as 'synergy' managing the various available channels and customer touchpoints in such a way across channels. Over the past decades, many researchers have claimed that omnichannel retailing is one of the keys to success in increasing customer satisfaction and profitability. "Omni" is derived from a Latin prefix meaning all and every (von Briel, Davidsson, and Recker 2018) (Hübner, Wollenburg, and Holzapfel 2016) found that customers have more opportunities to purchase using omnichannel retail, breaking down barriers of online and offline environments to offer customers a shopping experience. With the fast and rapid development of e-commerce, many of the world's leading retailers are digitally using all kinds of channels to reach customers and meet customer expectations. The process involves streamlining and integrating all channels in physical stores, in-store catalogs, internet kiosks, interactive tablets and call centers to provide customers with a convenient, enjoyable and comfortable shopping experience.

### Channel Integration Quality

(Sousa and Voss 2006) define channel integration quality as the ability to provide services in the form of an integrated customer experience through different channels. In a study by Madaleno et al (2007) stated that channel quality integration has a significant effect on customer behavior and behavior in different channels. Online shopping made by customers is able to increase the value of quality integration channels. (Saghiri et al. 2017) further distinguishes channel integration as one of the important supports for the advancement of the omnichannel business, and states that an existing multichannel business will not be able to develop into an omnichannel if the comprehensive integration of the channels is separated. Channel integration quality refers to the extent to which customers can freely access information and services from different channels to satisfy their needs.

### Perceived Fluency

Perceived fluency is considered a key factor that shapes user trust (Mosteller, Donthu, and Eroglu 2014). Perceived fluency is perceived fluency as the extent to which customers experience a natural, seamless, and continuous cross-channel experience. Perceived fluency refers to the extent to which customers feel comfortable when switching from one channel to another. (Majrashi and Hamilton 2015) further deconstructs perceived fluency into five dimensions: a) Tasks. The smoothness of the task refers to the extent to which customers feel comfortable and do not experience obstacles when moving from one channel to another. b) Content. Content fluency refers to the degree to which, after a channel transition, customers experience continuous reading or browsing of service content and information. c) interactions. Interaction smoothness refers to the degree to which cross-channel service interactions are continuous and interconnected. d) Cognition. Fluency of cognition indicates that the customer's judgment about the service remains unchanged after the channel transition. e) feeling fluency. fluency of feelings indicates that customers have the same level of feelings towards the service after the channel transition. In general, the five fluency dimensions cover different but interrelated aspects of perceived fluency in the context of omnichannel services.

### Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction measures how a company's products or services meet or exceed customer needs and expectations. According to (Widagdo and Roz 2020) customer satisfaction is measured by the customer's pleasant experience after buying a product and/or service. The successful synchronization and integration of physical stores and online channels plays an important role in the omnichannel strategy to ensure and increase customer satisfaction and loyalty to the brand. Cook (2014) suggests retailers use omnichannel to increase customer satisfaction and combine their online and offline environments to provide customers with a unified, seamless and enjoyable shopping experience in physical or online stores. Hedonic motivation and experiences directly create positive value to increase customer satisfaction. Companies are obligated to maintain and cultivate online relationships with customers. Relationships facilitated by new technologies, social media and big data are critical to managing and influencing customers in providing personalized experiences to increase customer satisfaction Kotler & Armstrong (2001) stated that, customer satisfaction is the level of one's feelings after comparing what is seen with what he wants. A client will involve different levels of fulfillment if the execution of the goods and the goods that arrive are according to his wishes, and will feel disappointed if the goods sent are not according to his wishes. Usually the evaluation of the form of goods and benefits,

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or the goods or services themselves, in providing a satisfactory level of utilization. Client fulfillment can be utilized by trade substance to create client loyalty. This is often far more important than trying to acquire modern clients, because the costs involved in acquiring modern clients far outweigh the costs involved in retaining old ones.

### III. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Integrated interaction of customer service channels is the ability to be able to provide integrated service experiences across various omnichannel channels such as shops, websites, mobile channels, social media, and all points other customer contacts (Shen et al. 2018). Without proper integration of marketing channels, omnichannel services cannot run. (Wixom and Todd 2005) model shows that user evaluation of the technology features and functions of the focused technology will determine and shape user perceptions of technology usage. Omnichannel services emphasize the synergistic management of all channels and require integrated quality of interaction across multiple customer service channels. Therefore, channel integration is critical for businesses using an omnichannel strategy. (Saghiri et al. 2017; Shen et al. 2018) show that the quality of integration will increase the value perceived by customers and is a critical point in business success. (Zhang et al. 2018) and (Verhoef et al. 2015) found evidence that quality channel integration has a positive effect on information sharing about consumer decision making. In relation to customer loyalty using omnichannel, it shows that perceived ease of use and service quality are antecedents of satisfaction, and this has a positive effect on customer loyalty. (Bendoly et al. 2005) and Schramm-Klein et al. (2011) also revealed channel integration and its impact on purchasing decisions, revealing that perceptions of a higher level of integration will increase loyalty. When the choice of marketing channels is wide enough, there will be more alternative channels for customers to access the services provided, and thus customers will have more flexibility (Sousa and Voss 2006). The wide selection of channels available to omnishoppers implies that the channels are interconnected and integrated, as only in this way can customers freely select channels to meet their specific needs. The hypothesis in this study is: There is a positive relationship between integrated interaction on customer satisfaction

Perceived fluency refers to the ease of processing information (Shen et al. 2018). (Majrashi and Hamilton 2015; Shen et al. 2018) define perceived fluency in the context of an omnichannel strategy as how customers feel when interacting between channels of business interaction without interruption and barriers. Research by (Shen et al. 2018) revealed that perceived fluency is an important component of the omnichannel strategy, where the interaction of perceived fluency has a positive impact on the use of omnichannel services. (Cassab and MacLachlan 2006) present results showing a direct effect of perceived fluency on customer loyalty. Perceived fluency is a factor that has a positive effect on loyalty. In the context of omnichannel services, customers increasingly expect a unified service experience across multiple channels (Lazaris et al. 2021). If an omnichannel service provider can offer customers a smooth and seamless cross-channel experience, then it is more likely that the customer will use the omnichannel service. Based on the Wixom & Todd model, perceived fluency is believed that when customers experience a smooth multichannel experience, they will be more likely to increase their behavior using omnichannel services. The hypothesis in this study is there is a positive relationship between perceived fluency on customer satisfaction.

### IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Referring to the formulation of the problem that has been defined in the previous chapter, this research uses quantitative methods to verify the theories that have been made through different tests and information handling. The population used in this research is Daihatsu car consumers at PT. Asco Prima Mobilindo East Java. The sampling technique used in this study is to use probability sampling technique. In this study there were 12 items x 10 = 120. A total of 120 could already represent the entire population that was used as the object of research.

### V. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### Hypothesis testing

#### Relationship between integrated interaction channel on customer satisfaction

Table 1. Regression Test Results

Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	6.656	1.651		4.033	.000
	Integrated Interaction	.529	.134	.479	3.856	.004

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Loyalty

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Table 1 above shows the results of the SPSS output from a simple regression test in which a significance value of 0.004 is obtained, which is greater than the baseline level of significance, which is 0.05. Based on these results, it shows that the Integrated Interaction variable has a significant effect on the Customer Loyalty variable, meaning that in testing the first hypothesis, the research results can accept the hypothesis which says that there is a positive relationship between integrated interactions on customer satisfaction

### Relationship between perceived fluency on customer satisfaction

**Table 2. Regression Test Results**

Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	9.694	1.609		6.024	.000
	Perceived Fluency	.035	.104	.393	4.013	.003

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Loyalty

Based on the results of the regression test on the relationship between perceived fluency and customer satisfaction as shown in table 4.14 above, it shows that the SPSS output results obtain a significance value of 0.003, this figure is also greater than the baseline significance level of 0.05. Therefore, on the basis of these results, it can be said that the perceived fluency variable has a significant effect on the Customer Loyalty variable, meaning that the hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between perceived fluency and customer satisfaction can be accepted.

## DISCUSSION

### The relationship between the integrated interaction channel on customer satisfaction

Referring to the results of the first hypothesis test, it was found that there is a significant and positive relationship between the integrated interaction of service channels on customer satisfaction, from these results it can be interpreted that integrated interaction on service channels owned by companies can have a significant and positive influence on consumer satisfaction. These results are in line with and support the results of previous research conducted by (Saghiri et al. 2017; Shen et al. 2018) who revealed that the quality of integration will increase the value felt by customers and is a determining point in business success. Then (Verhoef et al. 2015; Zhang et al. 2018) also found evidence that quality channel integration has a positive effect on information sharing about consumer decision making. In relation to consumer loyalty clarified by research conducted by (Bendoly et al. 2005) and (Schramm-Klein et al. 2011) who revealed that channel integration and its impact on purchasing decisions, stated that perceptions of a higher level of integration would increase loyalty. These results also coincide with the goal of Unified Interaction of customer service channels which is the ability to be able to provide a unified service experience across multiple omnichannel channels such as stores, websites, mobile channels, social media, and all other customer touchpoints (Shen et al. 2018). Without proper integration of marketing channels, omnichannel services cannot run. The results obtained as mentioned above show that the ability to provide services in the form of an integrated customer experience through different channels owned by PT. Asco Prima Mobilindo East Java can have a positive impact on the level of customer satisfaction for Daihatsu cars, or it can be interpreted that PT. Asco Prima Mobilindo East Java is able to identify, fulfill and satisfy consumer needs very well so that consumer expectations and expectations can be achieved.

### The relationship between perceived fluency on customer satisfaction

The results of the second hypothesis test found that there is a significant and positive relationship between perceived fluency on customer satisfaction, this can be interpreted that the comfort felt by consumers when switching from one channel to another has a positive influence on the satisfaction they feel, meaning the higher consumer comfort when switching channels will make consumer satisfaction also greater. These results are in line with research by (Shen et al. 2018) which revealed that perceived fluency is an important component of the omnichannel strategy, where the interaction of perceived fluency has a positive impact on the use of omnichannel services. Then research by (Cassab and MacLachlan 2006) also presented results showing a direct effect of perceived fluency on customer loyalty. Perceived fluency is a factor that has a positive effect on loyalty. This is also supported by the (Wixom and Todd 2005) model which believes that when customers experience a smooth multichannel experience, they are more likely to increase their behavior using omnichannel services. Based on these results it can be said that



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the cross-channel experience that is natural, seamless, and sustainable for Daihatsu car consumers at PT. Asco Prima Mobilindo East Java also gave a very positive signal to the increasing level of satisfaction felt by consumers. So that in this case PT. Asco Prima Mobilindo East Java is also able to recognize, meet and satisfy consumer needs very well through perceived fluency.

### VI. CONCLUSION

As with the description of the results and discussion that has been explained previously, several conclusions were obtained in this study as follows the first results of the study reveal have a positive impact on the level of customer satisfaction for Daihatsu cars, or it can be interpreted that PT. Asco Prima Mobilindo East Java is able to identify, meet and satisfy consumer needs very well so that consumer expectations and expectations can be achieved. Second, found that the natural, seamless, and sustainable cross-channel experience felt by Daihatsu car consumers at PT. Asco Prima Mobilindo East Java also gave a very positive signal to the increasing level of satisfaction felt by consumers. So that in this case PT. Asco Prima Mobilindo East Java is also able to recognize, meet and satisfy consumer needs very well through perceived fluency.

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