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ABSTRACT: The difficulty of translating the in-store experience to the online environment is one of the main reasons why the fashion industry has been slower than other sectors to adopt e-commerce. Recently, however, new information technologies (ITs) have enabled consumers to evaluate fashion online, creating an interactive and exciting shopping experience. As a result, clothing has become the fastest-growing online category of goods bought in the United Kingdom. This trend could have serious consequences for brick-and-mortar stores. The aim of this quantitative research is to gain a better understanding of multichannel fashion-shopping experiences, focusing on the role of IT and the crossover effects between channels. In particular, I explore the influence of the level of online experience on the perceptions and motivations of fashion consumers when they buy across multiple channels. The theoretical framework of hedonic and utilitarian shopping values is applied to measure consumers' shopping experiences and shopping motivations to buy in different channels. The results from a quantitative survey of 439 consumers in the United Kingdom suggest the need to redefine the in-store shopping experience, promoting the use of technology as a way to create an engaging and integrated experience among channels. Retailers must think in all channels holistically, boosting interactive and new technologies for the Internet and taking advantage of all touchpoints with the consumer, including mobile devices and social networks.

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES: Brick-and-mortar stores, e-commerce, e-tail, hedonic value, information technologies, multichannel retail, shopping experience, shopping motivations, utilitarian value.

Today's retail environment is more competitive than ever [22]. In a retail scene dominated by multichannel retailers, the Internet has transformed and will continue to transform the retail sector in coming years [18, 25, 51]. In recent times, more and more retailers have moved into this channel looking for greater profitability [22], and as a consequence e-commerce has grown significantly over the past few years, at a rate that even outpaces traditional retail channels [59], with future prospects looking very optimistic [16, 18].

The fashion industry was slower than other sectors to adopt e-commerce [65], and one of the main reasons was the difficulty of translating the in-store experience to the online environment. Clothing is considered to be a high-involvement product category, related to personal ego [34] and products that need to be seen, felt, touched [12], and tried on because they are difficult to evaluate [65]. Specifically, decision makers following the fast-fashion business

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model have been reluctant to go online, because fast fashion has traditionally been based on consumers' making regular visits to the store to see what new items have arrived [47].

To bridge the gap between the channels, different technologies such as augmented reality and 3D virtual models have been used to improve the online shopping experience, to the extent that the Internet has changed the role that technology plays in fashion retail [19]. Recent data thus show that fashion has become the fastest-growing product category bought online in the United Kingdom: The London-based market research firm Mintel reports growth of 147 percent since 2006 and forecasts that online fashion will grow 86 percent, to reach almost £9.4 billion in 2016 [14].

What are the consequences for brick-and-mortar stores? There is a gap in understanding the extent to which online experiences influence consumers' expectations for their multichannel shopping experiences. Therefore, two research questions are proposed. First, how is the role of the physical store evolving to adapt to new circumstances? Second, are the Internet and digital technology changing the multichannel fashion shopping experience?

The general aim of this research is to gain a better understanding of consumers' fashion-shopping experiences in different retail channels. The specific objectives of the research are (1) to establish the characteristics of the multichannel shopping experience in fashion retailing and (2) to determine whether the level of online shopping familiarity shapes the multichannel fashion experience and influences consumers' motivations to buy in different channels.

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows. First, the determinants of the in-store and online experience in fashion retailing are discussed with reference to the consumer perspective and the theoretical framework applied. Next, the quantitative methodology is set out and explained. The results are then detailed and the implications and conclusions derived. Last, limitations and further research proposals are addressed.

Literature Review

The In-Store Experience: The Role of Technology

From the retailers' perspective, even when the role of the store is evolving, it remains the primary point of contact with the consumer [11]. For consumers, according to market research firm Mintel, shopping in stores prevails as the most popular route to buy new clothing [48], as stores provide the instant gratification of buying the product and experiencing the service [36]. However, the dominance of brick-and-mortar stores has declined [14], and data show that the average length of time consumers spend shopping in stores has decreased [10]. Some authors point to e-commerce as directly responsible for this situation [14].

The store experience is key in generating value perceptions in retailing [35], which necessitates creating a superior experience for the consumer. This experience cannot be understood without an appreciation of the role of atmospherics, defined as the conscious designing of space to create certain effects in buy-

ers [37]. Atmospherics have a direct effect on the customer experience [54], influencing various psychological and behavioral shopping outcomes, such as an increase in willingness to buy [5] and in customer share (the amount of business each customer does with a company) [3], as well as the influence on the value perceived by consumers in their shopping experience [4]. Puccinelli et al. [54], drawing on a previous work by Baker et al. [5], referred to three primary sets of cues: design, ambient, and social cues. Design cues include both external variables (window displays) and internal variables (flooring), and social cues refer to employees and presence of other customers. Ambient cues include aspects such as lighting, store layout, music, and use of technology in the store.

Since technology is part of the in-store experience [57], it must be used to improve this experience [36] and meet customer expectations [19]. In addition, technology can create an attractive environment, making the shopping experience engaging and memorable [19, 38]. Technologies such as store-ordering hubs, iPads, and display screens create a new merchandise layout and make products more accessible and convenient to buy in-store [22, 72].

Furthermore, technology is the key to creating an integrated experience between channels. Technology redefines the store experience and store layouts through click-and-collect services or more advanced technologies such as interactive fitting rooms that connect with social networks [19]. However, it is important to note that retailers must focus on the technology that is relevant for consumers [22] and really provides value for them [19].

In the fashion industry, sensory elements are especially important, as consumers look for entertainment when they buy clothing [19]. Therefore, the in-store experience should provide a convenient, relaxing, and fun environment that makes shopping a pleasurable experience [10], and it seems that technology could contribute to that.

The Online Experience

Lack of experiential information [46] and physical interaction with the product [55] is one of the main barriers to buying fashion online. Because fashion clothing requires a multisensory input [12], it has been proved that this lack of direct experience may lead to less consumer enjoyment in the shopping process and a greater perception of risk [46]. However, thanks to innovations in digital technologies, this multisensory input can now be translated to the online environment in a number of ways.

The importance of retail atmosphere extends to the online environment [54], and Web sites use atmospherics similarly to traditional retail stores [45]. Technological innovation makes it possible to translate variables such as color, music, and lights alongside others such as smell and touch [45]. These atmospheric cues influence shopper responses during the Web site visit, increasing the level of pleasure felt by the shopper [21], generating a positive attitude toward fashion shopping, and directly influencing purchase intention [73].

Consequently, technology is blurring the boundaries between the in-store and online shopping experiences, assisting consumers to evaluate fashion

online [46] and creating an exciting and interactive online experience [66]. There are different levels of interactivity, from image enlargement and mix-and-match technology to more advanced image interactive technologies such as virtual fitting rooms [40]. These interactive technologies are supposed to have a different effect on consumer responses; thus, a high level of interactivity positively influences affective aspects of the consumer experience [40] and consumer attitudes toward online fashion shopping [73]. Interaction with the product contributes to reduce perceived risks [40] and generates stronger purchase intention than that generated by passive information [62]. For example, virtual fitting rooms have been proved to boost online sales and reduce returns [55]. Consumers can create models with their own image by providing information about their height and weight and then dress their virtual model with the items they prefer. With this information, the retailer can automatically make recommendations on matching items [43]. Personalization thus looks to become a major trend, with consumers able to create digital profiles detailing their requirements and their preferences, and retailers using these profiles to tailor fashion recommendations [14].

It would therefore appear that the online shopping experience should be a balance between enjoyment and functionality [55].

The Consumer's Perspective

The digital revolution has created empowered consumers whose expectations are much higher than before [57]. They prefer to use multiple channels when shopping, and multichannel consumers have specific characteristics that make them special: on average, they spend more money [42], buy more frequently [39], and have a longer customer lifetime value [64] than conventional shoppers. However, they are also more demanding and expect more from their shopping experiences [44]. Their shopping behavior is more exploratory, seeking more variety than consumers who buy in a single channel [39, 56]. In addition, multichannel consumers consider their shopping experience holistically [31] and look for an integrated [77] and consistent experience between channels [58]. They do not think of channels in isolation but combine them and made decisions based on their mood and lifestyle demands [49].

The choice of channel is mainly influenced by the type of good [53], and moreover, in the case of fashion, the consumer's mood is a key determining element [49]. Hence, consumers are more likely to select a physical store when they shop for hedonic fashion goods because strong physical environments elevate the mood through opportunities for social interaction, product evaluation, and sensory stimulation [49]. However, recent data show that consumers consider online fashion as a form of entertainment, devoting their leisure time to search for clothes online [65].

Adoption of new technologies has changed shoppers' behavior. Growth of smartphone ownership and deeper mobile Internet penetration are two contributors to this change. In fact, consumers consider their own mobile devices as the most important form of in-store technology [24]. Increasing demand for mobile Web sites and applications confirms the challenge that mobile Internet

represents for fashion retailers [20]. Social networks are an important challenge, too, as they are becoming a place to start the shopping process, mainly through people seeking advice on Facebook and Twitter [20]. However, it is very common to use social networks to criticize brands, so retailers must take special care of them as a part of their multichannel offer [13].

Finally, it is important to consider that use of technology in the online environment produces a concrete shopping experience that consumers could miss in the store. Consumers looking for an interactive experience prefer 3D technologies such as image enlargement and augmented reality [66]. From their perspective, however, the in-store experience has been unchanged for more than 30 years [30]. They are eager for different experiences, and they are able to pay more for them [52]. What they expect from stores, in short, is a memorable shopping experience [44].

Therefore, given the characteristics of multichannel shoppers, it is imperative to analyze and compare their in-store and online shopping experiences in fashion retail.

Theoretical Framework: Hedonic and Utilitarian Shopping Values

The concept of value has been defined in multiple ways in the literature. Zeithaml [76] carried out an extensive review of the concept and considers value to comprise all the factors, qualitative and quantitative, objective and subjective, that form the shopping experience as a whole. So, value is not limited to product acquisition but reflects the entire consumption experience [28].

Shopping value can be both hedonic and utilitarian [4]. Hedonic shopping value refers to the value received from the multisensory, fantasy, and emotive aspects of the shopping experience [27]. It is subjective and individualistic, and it is related by adjectives such as fun, pleasurable, and enjoyable [32]. Utilitarian shopping value, in contrast, is rational and task oriented [6], and it can be considered a cognitive and nonemotional outcome of shopping [27]. Hedonic and utilitarian dimensions are important because they are present in all shopping experiences and consumer behavior [6, 33]. Furthermore, they are a key element in predicting consumers' shopping intentions [32].

Although shopping experiences produce both hedonic and utilitarian values, the outcome may be different based on factors such as the product purchased or the shopping channel used. With regard to the product, clothing is classified as a high-hedonic product category due to its symbolic, experiential, and pleasing properties [15, 41]. But to measure and understand the complete shopping experience, one must consider the utilitarian side of shopping as well as the hedonic [29].

Creation of hedonic environments is especially important for products with strong hedonic attributes [9]. Although hedonic shopping value is commonly associated with brick-and-mortar stores due to its socially visible nature [58], and the study of online consumer behavior has traditionally taken a utilitarian perspective, this distinction no longer applies [67]. Academic research suggests that functional attributes no longer exclusively drive online buying

and that enjoyment is a strong predictor of attitude toward e-shopping, making social and hedonic motives important not only for shopping in general but for e-shopping too [9]. In fact, the hedonic elements of a Web site may influence consumers' emotional and cognitive states, creating satisfaction and enjoyment in the online shopping process [21]. Recent data show that emotion plays a key role in online purchasing, despite lack of a physical product with which to engage [55]. In the case of brick-and-mortar stores, the hedonic value leads to stronger consumer loyalty and has a positive influence on the channel choice and repatronage intention [8, 10], but utilitarian value is important for repatronage intention too [33].

The Role of the Experience in Shopping Online

Prior positive experience with the Internet creates positive attitudes toward the channel and is an important predictor of online buying [61]. In particular, use of the Internet for browsing increases the likelihood of buying through it [12]. Similarly, longer experience in buying online has a positive effect on shopping activity [60] because consumers became more confident using the Internet and perceive less risk in purchasing across multiple channels [63].

In the case of fashion clothing, prior experience with the Internet is the main variable that influences the intention to purchase online [75]. However, previous experience with the product is an important element, too, because it produces stronger product judgment confidence, which leads to stronger purchase intentions [74].

It is clear that the Internet is changing the role technology plays in the store and the shopping experience itself [19], and growth in online shopping reduces the time that consumers spend in the store [14]. However, there is lack of specific research about how a better experience in buying fashion online can influence the multichannel fashion-shopping experience and consumers' motivations to use different channels, including the high street store.

Methodology

A quantitative survey approach was taken in order to address the objectives of the research [32, 33]. Two different channels were considered—brick-and-mortar stores and the Internet—and respondents were asked to evaluate and compare their last shopping experience in each of them.

The objective of the first part of the questionnaire was to measure respondents' perceptions and motivations about their last shopping experience in physical stores and on the Internet, applying the proposed theoretical framework. The first question captured consumers' multichannel behavior. Next, to make respondents remember more clearly their last shopping processes in stores and online, there was a question about what they bought, including "nothing" as a choice, because a shopping process can provide hedonic value in itself, even when you do not buy anything [67].

In-store and online shopping were considered two independent experiences [49, 70] so that consumers could focus on them more easily.

To measure consumers' last shopping experience, the Personal Shopping Value scale developed by Babin et al. [4] was applied. This scale has been widely used by academics to study shopping behaviors [1, 32, 33] and consists of 15 items, 11 for hedonic shopping value and 4 for utilitarian shopping value. Participants were instructed to indicate their degree of agreement with these items using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (totally agree) to 5 (totally disagree). For online shopping, a question to measure consumers' familiarity with buying fashion online was included. The item was adapted from San Martín et al. [60] and measures the level of online experience by offering two options: "high experience in buying fashion online" and "low experience in buying fashion online."

Last, consumers' hedonic and utilitarian shopping motivations were measured in both channels. The items related to hedonic shopping motivations were taken from the scale developed by Arnolds and Reynolds [2], which was applied by To et al. [67] to the online environment. These authors included utilitarian motivations for the digital channel that have also been applied to the physical channel in this research. The specific items refer to adventure shopping (to shop by searching for stimulation), idea shopping (to be aware of the latest trends and new products), value shopping (bargain hunting), and social shopping (to socialize and be in touch with others) as hedonic motivations; and convenience, cost saving, and selection as utilitarian motivations.

The second part of the questionnaire consisted of demographics, including gender, age, education, working activity, and income level. Because research about fashion shopping has mostly focused on students and females [43], a wider target was defined for this research: men and women, 16 to 54 years old, with fashion shopping experience in brick-and-mortar stores and the online channel, and who were familiar with the process of searching or buying in both channels.

The questionnaire was conducted online using a snowball sampling procedure. This sampling method has been widely used in social science research [7] as an efficient and effective method to provide in-depth and relatively quick results. Certain authors recommend working with large samples that are demographically representative to minimize the limitation of sample validation presented by the snowball sampling method [68]. To procure a sample based on the defined profile, e-mails of people from diverse cultural, economic, and professional backgrounds who met the requirements were selected to receive the questionnaire [68].The questionnaires were distributed between March and June 2012 in the United Kingdom, for a total of 439 completed questionnaires.

The demographics of the sample are detailed in Table 1. From the 439 respondents, 68.6 percent were women, and men accounted for 31.3 percent. With regard to age, the main segments represented were young people ages 16–24 (47.8 percent) and young adults ages 25–34 (37.8 percent).

The income level was polarized from less than £600/month (US$1,000/month), or approximately 39 percent, to £1,000–£1,999/month

Table 1. Sample Demographics.

Gender	
Male	31.4
Female	68.6
Age	
16-24	47.8
25-34	37.8
35-44	8.9
45-54	5.2
Education	
Secondary school	10.4
Higher education	41.5
Postgraduate	48.1
Work activity	
Full-time worker	40.1
Part-time worker	8.9
Student	47.6
Unemployed	3.5
Income level	
Less than £600	38.9
From £600 to £999	9.5
From £1,000 to £1,999	26.8
From £2,000 to £2,999	13.8
From £3,000 to £3,999	4.9
From £4,000 to £4,999	2.3
£5,000 or more	4.0

(US$1,650–US$3,300/month), or approximately 39 percent. The reason could be directly related to work activity: 49 percent of the sample were employed, and 47.6 percent were students.

Results

Exploratory Factor Analysis

Construct validity of the Personal Shopping Value scale was confirmed with the use of exploratory factor analysis, applying principal component analysis with varimax rotation to determine how observed variables were linked to their underlying factors in the multi-item scale applied for both channels [1].

The data fulfill the requirements for sample adequacy [69]. For the brick-and-mortar stores, the KMO (Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin) value was 0.900, and in

the case of the Internet, 0.892, and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant in both cases (0.000).

All item loadings were greater than 0.4, a level commonly considered significant [23]. Each item loaded higher in its intended factor, which gives preliminary evidence of internal consistency and discriminant validity, confirmed by a correlation matrix in which item correlations were higher within each construct compared with items of other constructs [69].

Last, the total variance explained by the two factors was 55.8 percent in the case of brick-and-mortar stores and 57.9 percent in the case of the Internet [26].

Fashion Shopping Experience

Multichannel Behavior

When respondents were asked about their last shopping trip to brick-and-mortar stores, the first thing they had to do was to remember whether they had used the online channel before this shopping trip. Of the total sample, 38.1 percent searched for information about the product, 26.2 percent compared prices online, and 23.1 percent looked for inspiration in blogs, forums, or social networks (as shown in Table 2). So, multichannel behavior is a reality, and people interact with channels in different ways. With regard to demographic differences, Workman [71] established that fashion consumer groups can be differentiated according to gender. In this study, men were more functional in their multichannel shopping behavior, searching for information online (43.1 percent vs. 35.7 percent of women) and comparing information online (34.9 percent vs. 21.4 percent of women). Women appeared to be more experiential, looking for inspiration in blogs and social networks more than men (26.1 percent vs. 17.4 percent). These data are coherent with the theory of Dittmar et al. [17] about the influence of gender differences on use of retail channels. But it is important to underline that these differences in the percentages are very small in the younger age segment (16–24), although they increase with the age of the respondents.

The second question on the questionnaire was related to respondents' last online shopping experience. Respondents had to remember whether they had gone to a brick-and-mortar store before that. The results are displayed in Table 3. Of the respondents, 21.8 percent had gone to a store to see and touch the product, and 23.9 percent to try it on. In this case, no significant differences were observed in the percentage of men and women who went to a store prior to shopping online, nor were there any significant differences based on age.

In-Store and Online Shopping Experience

The Personal Shopping Value scale developed by Babin et al. [4] was applied to calculate the hedonic and utilitarian means for the brick-and-mortar and the Internet shopping experiences for the total sample. With the objective of

Table 2. Multichannel Behavior: Online Previous to Shopping in Store.

	Percent
Search for information online	38.1
Compare prices online	26.2
Look for inspiration in forums, blogs, social networks.	23.1

Table 3. Multichannel Behavior: In Store Previous to Shopping Online.

	Percent
Go to store to see the product	38.1
Go to store to try the product on	26.2

comparing both means to assess whether they were significantly different, several paired-sample dependent *t*–tests were run to compare means from the same individuals.

The results for brick-and-mortar stores are presented in Table 4. Surprisingly, utilitarian value ($M = 3.35$, $SE = 0.04316$) is significantly higher than hedonic value ($M = 3.02$, $SE = 0.04353$), $t(380) = -6.008$, $p < 0.05$, for the brick-and-mortar shopping experience for the total sample.

The literature review suggested that the in-store fashion experience should be an enjoyable and pleasurable experience, and the hedonic elements are crucial to this. The consequences of these results are analyzed below.

For online shopping, as shown in Table 5, utilitarian value ($M = 3.4764$, $SE = 0.04348$) is significantly higher than hedonic value ($M = 2.91$, $SE = 0.04452$), $t(349) = -9.502$, $p < 0.05$, for the total sample. The result was expected, because utilitarian value traditionally has been associated with online shopping owing to the functional nature of the channel. But considering that recent research shows online fashion shopping as an entertaining and enjoyable activity, it would be valuable to analyze how the level of experience in buying clothing online can influence consumers' perceptions and motivations to buy in different channels.

The Role of the Level of Experience in Buying Fashion Online

Perceived Shopping Value

The questionnaire included one question related to the level of experience in buying fashion online (high vs. low experience). High experience was claimed by 54.7 percent of the sample; the other 45.3 percent had low experience. Based on this result, the sample was segmented into two groups. To confirm whether level of experience really makes a difference, the shopping value perceptions of the respondents were compared through a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) by taking the means of hedonic and utilitarian value perceived in

Table 4. Hedonic Value vs. Utilitarian Value: Brick-and-Mortar Stores.

	Mean	SD	*t*	gl	Sig. (bilateral)
Par 1 HedBMmean UtilitBMmean	-32458	1.05309	-6.008	379	0.000

Table 5. Hedonic Value vs. Utilitarian Value: Internet.

	Mean	SD	*t*	gl	Sig. (bilateral)
Par 1 HedOnlinemean UtilitOnlinemean	-55737	1.09585	-9.502	348	0.000

both channels as dependent variables, and experience in buying fashion online as the factor. The results, shown in Table 6, confirm that there are no significant differences in the in-store experience perception for individuals with either high or low experience in buying fashion online. However, in online shopping the differences are significant for both hedonic and utilitarian value perceptions. So the level of experience makes a difference in the online channel but does not affect perceptions about in-store shopping.

Hedonic and Utilitarian Shopping Motivations

Consumer motives for shopping are basic to understanding consumer behavior [9, 50]. In the case of fashion shopping, it is important to know whether people with high experience in shopping online have different motivations for buying through the Internet and brick-and-mortar stores than people with low experience in buying fashion online.

As detailed before, seven hedonic or utilitarian shopping motivations were taken into consideration. Following the same procedure, a one-way ANOVA was run, taking the mean of the hedonic and utilitarian motivations considered as dependent variables. The results are summarized in Tables 7 and 8.

There are no significant differences between buyers with low and those with high experience in online fashion in their motivations to buy in physical stores. However, in the case of the Internet, significant differences in most hedonic and utilitarian motivations were observed, with the exceptions of value shopping and adventure shopping.

Discussion and Implications

From a theoretical perspective, this research contributes to the understanding of the consumer shopping experience in a multichannel retail environment for a

Table 6. Shopping Value: Low- vs. High-Experience Users (One-Way ANOVA).

Shopping value	Mean	*F*-value	Significance
Hedonic brick-and-mortar		2.241	0.135
Low experience	2.9551		
High experience	3.0942		
Utilitarian brick-and-mortar		0.13	0.910
Low experience	3.3560		
High experience	3.3665		
Hedonic Internet		17.233	0.000
Low experience	2.7204		
High experience	3.0833		
Utilitarian Internet		16.207	0.000
Low experience	3.288		
High experience	3.6322		

Table 7. Shopping Motivation: Low vs. High Brick-and-Mortar Experience (One-Way ANOVA).

Shopping motivation	Mean	*F*-value	Significance
Adventure brick-and-mortar		0.798	0.372
Low experience	2.5253		
High experience	2.6387		
Value brick-and-mortar		0.211	0.646
Low experience	3.2025		
High experience	3.1414		
Idea brick-and-mortar		0.332	0.565
Low experience	2.6962		
High experience	2.7749		
Convenience brick-and-mortar		4.659	0.032
Low experience	3.2278		
High experience	2.9895		
Cost-saving brick-and-mortar		3.806	0.052
Low experience	2.8734		
High experience	2.6702		
Social brick-and-mortar		1.422	0.234
Low experience	2.8544		
High experience	3.0262		
Selection brick-and-mortar		3.192	0.075
Low experience	3.2911		
High experience	3.089		

specific sector, fashion retailing, in a specific market, the United Kingdom. The high level of development of e-commerce in the United Kingdom has resulted in a consumer shopping experience different from that of other countries with lower levels of e-commerce adoption. This exertion of strong influence of a high level of online experience on the perceptions and motivations of fashion

Table 8. Shopping Motivation: Low vs. High Internet Experience.

Shopping motivation	Mean	*F*-value	Significance
Adventure Internet		1.060	0.304
Low experience	2.4430		
High experience	2.5759		
Value Internet		1.043	0.308
Low experience	3.0633		
High experience	3.1937		
Idea Internet		8.952	0.003
Low experience	2.7152		
High experience	3.1204		
Convenience Internet		16.430	0.000
Low experience	3.6139		
High experience	4.0995		
Cost-saving Internet		25.226	0.000
Low experience	3.4051		
High experience	3.9319		
Social Internet		11.776	0.001
Low experience	2.7152		
High experience	3.1204		
Selection Internet		22.249	0.000
Low experience	3.6709		
High experience	4.178		

consumers when they buy across multiple channels is precisely the focus of the paper and what makes the research more challenging.

In terms of managerial implications, consumers are immersed in an economy of experiences [52], which means that they look for superior experiences when they buy fashion in stores. If they do not find an experience that fits their expectations, or if they perceive their experience as something more utilitarian than hedonic, they will use their limited time for other leisure activities considered to be more enjoyable and satisfying [10]. So, consumers' perception about their in-store experience has important consequences for the channel.

In addition, the more consumers use and become familiar with online fashion shopping, the more they enjoy the process. This has consequences for stores as well because consumers expect an integrated experience between channels, and this implies that presenting the products in a similar style in both channels and creating an overall consistent experience would be beneficial for the multichannel retailer.

The research results clearly show that multichannel consumers do not separate channels when they shop fashion, which is consistent with previous literature [31, 58, 77]. Furthermore, consumers do not have a clear channel strategy. Some of them simply see and buy the product, either in the store or on a Web site, and others see the product in a blog, look for the price online, go to the store to try it on, and buy it from home because they prefer to avoid queues. It is not a case of simply using different channels, but using the different potentials of each channel. This implies that consumers expect a consistent

experience between channels, and innovations in digital technology mean that fashion retailers have never had more opportunities to offer this experience. Consistency implies that brick-and-mortar stores should incorporate the online technologies that are relevant for consumers and that will help to create a more attractive and engaging environment, thus motivating consumers to shop at the store [30]. Consistency also means that retailers must consider all the devices that are part of the online channel and face the challenge that smartphones present, considering that mobile devices are currently redefining the in-store experience. A way of taking advantage of these mobile devices is through location-based technology, which can help to drive customers to stores [19], or through the social networks that consumers take with them to the store. These social media networks represent a big opportunity to connect with fashion consumers and to get insights from them in real time. Moreover, clothing is by far the most popular category for mobile shopping, and fashion seems to work especially well on tablets [55], which provides more new opportunities for retailers.

The level of experience in buying fashion online makes a difference in the hedonic and utilitarian value perceived by the consumers in the process. This means that retailers should boost e-commerce as a part of a multichannel offer to ensure that clients discover all of its potential. As consumers become more experienced, their motivations to use the channel increase in the same way and they search or buy online looking for inspiration about new trends and products. They like to socialize with others in the shopping process, which means more opportunities to engage with them through the Web site. High-experience consumers are more motivated by utilitarian aspects like cost saving and convenience as well. This assertion is consistent with previous research about the positive effects of higher experience in shopping online on the shopping activity [60] and on the creation of positive attitudes toward the channel [61].

In spite of the evidence that e-commerce cuts the time that consumers spend in stores [14], higher online shopping experience does not have a significant effect on consumers' motivation to go to a store or even on their perception of the shopping value of the physical channel. However, the literature indicates that consumers expect a superior in-store experience and that technology plays a key role in that. In any case, the different channels must complement each other because consumers with different levels of experience in buying online will use them in a different and particular way.

Conclusions and Further Research

In an increasingly competitive retail environment, fashion retailers must find innovative ways to connect with their audience and offer them a relevant proposition. Technology enables integration of channels and gives new relevance to physical stores. But the most important thing is that technology must not be an end, but a medium to enhance high-quality customer experience.

The importance of the hedonic elements in the fashion shopping experience has been established, as well as how use of different technologies has created

an enjoyable fashion experience online. So the online channel should promote use of interactive and new technologies. Mobile connectivity via smartphones and tablets enables consumers to browse and shop anytime, anywhere, and mobile commerce is expanding rapidly. It is believed that, as consumers become more experienced in shopping online, they will expect a similar experience in stores. As a result, the store experience must be redefined and its role should evolve, as it is becoming one part of a larger and more connected customer experience.

It would be beneficial to complement this research with qualitative inquiry to gain deeper and richer insights into consumers' experiences in fashion shopping, specifically in relation to the influence of e-commerce on in-store experience perceptions. To test specific technologies, laboratory or field experiments would be the best option to determine what is really relevant for consumers.

This research provides a broad picture of the multichannel fashion shopping experience. For this reason, the respondent sample included both genders and a wide age range. It is recommended that further research be focused on specific targets with high relevance for fashion retailers, such as young people as well as older shoppers, whose relationship with technology is very different.

This research does not differentiate between devices used to buy fashion online. Considering the growing potential of tablets and smartphones for browsing and buying fashion, it is necessary to conduct specific research about touchscreen devices because their interactive functionality implies a totally different shopping experience.

Finally, online shopping is changing the future of retail. But if the Internet was once seen as a threat to the future of stores, it is now becoming clear that each channel complements the other. The key is to think in all channels holistically as consumers do; thus, the holistic experience begins before a customer enters the store and continues after the customer leaves. Retailers must find ways of taking advantage of all these touchpoints with the consumer. This is the big challenge now.

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