Linking Marketing Strategy Factors to Operational Performance: The Mediating Roles of Supply-Chain Efficiency and Consumer Behaviour in Oman's Retail Industry

Khalid Al-Amrani[1*], Nor Azah Jahari[1]

Faculty of Business and Accountancy, Universiti Selangor, Selangor, Malaysia

***Corresponding Author**

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ABSTRACT

Marketing strategies do not always translate into improved operational performance, particularly when they are disconnected from supply-chain capabilities and consumer responses. This study examines the relationship between marketing strategy and operational performance in Oman's retail industry, focusing on the mediating roles of supply-chain efficiency and consumer behaviour. Grounded in the Resource-Based View, the study employed a quantitative approach using 200 valid survey responses from retail-sector personnel in the Sultanate of Oman. The data were analysed using PLS-SEM. The findings demonstrate that marketing strategy positively influences operational performance, supply-chain efficiency, and consumer behaviour. Both mediators also positively influence operational performance and transmit the effects of marketing strategy through significant indirect pathways. These findings highlight the importance of integrating marketing initiatives with supply-chain operations and consumer-oriented practices. The study extends the application of the Resource-Based View to Oman's retail sector and provides practical insights for retailers seeking to strengthen operational performance through synchronising promotional strategies with supply chain logistics and outputs from consumer behaviour, while also supporting long-term commercial sustainability and the broader objectives of Oman Vision 2040.

Keywords: Consumer Behaviour; Operational Performance; Marketing Strategy; Retail Industry; Supply Chain Efficiency

INTRODUCTION

The retail industry is dynamic and multi-dimensional, operating in an increasingly complex and competitive commercial environment. Changing consumer preferences, rising expectations, and intensifying market competition have become important drivers of retail transformation. Retail performance therefore depends not only on a firm's ability to attract customers, but also on its capacity to translate consumer insights into effective strategic decisions and operational outcomes (Al-Fazari & Khan, 2024; El Moussaoui et al., 2022). Consequently, retail firms strategically allocate resources to develop and implement marketing strategies encompassing dynamic pricing, targeted promotion, store atmosphere, and service quality. When appropriately aligned with market demand and operational capabilities, these strategies can improve customer engagement, strengthen market positioning, and contribute to superior operational performance (Sukaatmadja et al., 2021).

Recent empirical literature highlights the growing importance of integrated information systems and responsive operational processes in enabling retailers to streamline service delivery, expand market reach, and respond more effectively to customer requirements (Li & Wang, 2023). In this context, marketing efforts effectiveness depends on more than the formulation of customer-oriented strategies; it also requires operational systems capable of supporting the promises made to customers. Retail managers must continuously align service quality, product availability, and delivery processes with changing consumer expectations while navigating intense market competition. This alignment is particularly important in emerging and digitally

transforming markets like the Sultanate of Oman, where retail firms must coordinate front-end marketing activities with back-end logistics and inventory management (Vrakas et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2023). Accordingly, supply-chain efficiency may represent an important mechanism through which marketing strategies are translated into operational outcomes, while consumer behaviour may help explain how customers' responses to those strategies contribute to firm performance.

Despite the strategic importance of these capabilities, retail firms in Oman face persistent operational challenges, including inventory fluctuations, supply-demand imbalances, and changes in consumer preferences and purchasing patterns, which can disrupt daily operations and undermine performance (Matriano, 2022). These challenges become more complex as retailing increasingly incorporates digital platforms and multiple customer touchpoints. Retailers must coordinate physical stores, online channels, product availability, and customer engagement to deliver consistent shopping experiences (Al-Amri & Sharma, 2021). Evidence from the wider Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) retail market indicates that digital commerce and omnichannel development are becoming increasingly important to retail competitiveness. For example, Alpen Capital (2024) reported that Oman's e-commerce sales grew at an estimated compound annual growth rate of 32.7% between 2018 and 2023, illustrating the growing importance of digital retail channels in the country. This development reinforces the need for retailers to coordinate promotional activities and consumer demand with inventory availability, replenishment, and distribution capabilities. Effective coordination may prevent stockouts, inventory availability, consistent service delivery, and efficient resource utilisation, thereby enhancing the operational benefits expected from marketing investments (Agyei-Owusu et al., 2022; Hanaysha, 2021).

In the Sultanate of Oman, retail businesses operate in an evolving commercial environment shaped by economic diversification, changing consumer expectations, and the gradual expansion of digital commerce. Although these developments create opportunities for market expansion, they also increase the need for retailers to coordinate marketing decisions with operational capabilities and changing purchasing patterns. The International Monetary Fund (IMF, 2025) estimated that e-commerce accounted for approximately 1% of Oman's total retail sales in early 2024, indicating that digital retail remained relatively underdeveloped despite the country's high internet penetration and growth potential. This coexistence of digitalisation opportunities and relatively limited e-commerce penetration highlights the importance of understanding how retailers can convert changing market conditions and marketing investments into measurable operational benefits.

The central research problem, therefore, concerns the extent to which marketing strategies translate into operational performance and the mechanisms through which this relationship occurs in the Omani retail industry. Although marketing strategies are intended to influence customer responses and stimulate demand, their operational benefits may be constrained when supply-chain processes cannot adequately support the resulting demand or when consumer responses do not translate into favourable business outcomes. For example, Shukri and Ismail (2023) found that retail firms in Oman encounter significant hurdles, including weak marketing strategy execution, inadequate technological integration, and fragmented supply chain routines which compromise overall performance and revenue productivity. Despite the relevance of these issues, the relationships among marketing strategy, supply-chain efficiency, consumer behaviour, and operational performance require further empirical investigation within the Omani retail context. Studies examining individual relationships may not fully explain how internal operational capabilities and customer-related responses jointly transmit the effects of marketing strategy to operational outcomes. Consequently, a framework that examines supply-chain efficiency and consumer behaviour as two distinct mediating mechanisms can provide a more comprehensive explanation of how marketing strategy may influence retail operational performance.

To address these gaps, the Resource-Based View (RBV) provides a theoretical foundation for understanding how firms deploy and coordinate their resources and capabilities to achieve superior performance. Barney (1991) argues that resources possessing valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable, and non-substitutable characteristics can underpin sustained competitive advantage. From this perspective, marketing strategy can be understood as an organisational capability for responding to market opportunities, while supply-chain efficiency represents an operational capability that supports the effective coordination of resources, inventory,

and distribution activities. Effective deployment of these capabilities may enable retailers to translate strategic priorities into improved operational outcomes (Al Majali, 2022). Consumer behaviour provides a complementary market-facing mechanism within the proposed framework because consumer responses to pricing, promotions, service quality, and the shopping environment may influence purchasing patterns and the effectiveness of marketing initiatives (Handayani et al., 2026). Although RBV primarily explains firm-level resources and capabilities, consumer behaviour can be incorporated as a market-response mechanism through which the consequences of marketing strategy may be reflected in operational performance. This distinction helps clarify the proposed roles of the two mediators, i.e., supply-chain efficiency captures an internal operational mechanism, whereas consumer behaviour captures a customer-related mechanism.

Against this background, the present study examines the relationship between marketing strategy and operational performance in the retail industry of Oman, with particular attention to the mediating roles of supply-chain efficiency and consumer behaviour. By investigating these two mechanisms within a single conceptual framework, the study seeks to extend the understanding of how marketing strategies are associated with operational outcomes through both internal operational processes and external market responses. The findings are expected to contribute context-specific evidence to the retail management literature and provide practical insights for managers seeking to align marketing decisions, supply-chain operations, and consumer-oriented initiatives to improve operational performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation: Resource-Based View

The Resource-Based View (RBV), originally proposed by Wernerfelt (1984) and further developed by Barney (1991), provides the theoretical foundation for explaining how firms achieve superior performance through the effective deployment and configuration of valuable organisational resources and capabilities. RBV argues that firms can develop competitive advantages when they possess resources that are valuable, rare, difficult to imitate, and non-substitutable (Barney, 1991). In the retail context, marketing strategy can therefore be viewed as an organisational capability through which firms identify market opportunities, respond to consumer requirements, allocate resources, and create customer value (Shafiee, 2024). The effectiveness of marketing strategy depends not only on the formulation of market-oriented initiatives but also on the firm's ability to integrate marketing activities with operational capabilities (Khan et al., 2025). From this perspective, supply-chain efficiency represents an important internal capability that enables retailers to coordinate inventory, replenishment, logistics, and product availability in response to market demand. Efficient supply-chain capabilities can therefore help translate marketing strategies into improved operational outcomes by supporting resource utilisation, demand responsiveness, and service execution.

RBV also provides a basis for understanding consumer behaviour as an external market-response mechanism through which marketing capabilities may influence operational performance. Although consumer behaviour is not an internal organisational resource, firms can deploy marketing capabilities to influence and respond to consumer preferences, purchasing patterns, and behavioural responses (Kofar Naisa et al., 2025). Favourable consumer responses can generate more predictable demand, strengthen customer retention, and influence the utilisation of operational resources (Kristiana et al., 2025). Accordingly, the present study conceptualises marketing strategy as an organisational capability whose effects on operational performance may occur through two complementary mechanisms, i.e., supply-chain efficiency as an internal operational mechanism and consumer behaviour as an external market-response mechanism. This integrated perspective provides a theoretical basis for examining how marketing strategy contributes to operational performance in the Omani retail industry.

Thus, the conceptual framework as illustrated in Figure 1 incorporates two distinct but complementary mediation mechanisms. Supply-chain efficiency represents the internal operational pathway, while consumer behaviour represents the external market-response pathway. Together, these mechanisms provide a more comprehensive explanation of how marketing strategy may translate into operational performance.

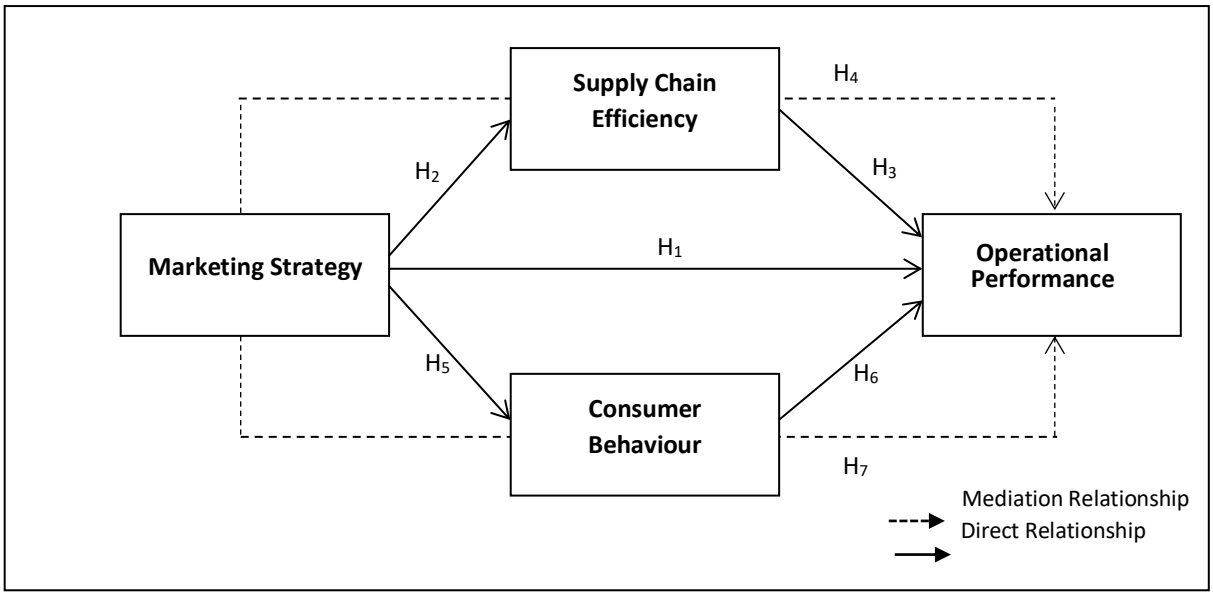


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Marketing Strategy and Operational Performance

Marketing strategy represents the strategic alignment of organisational resources and capabilities with changing external market demands. In the retail context, managers may employ core marketing activities, such as dynamic pricing, targeted promotional programmes, localised store atmosphere, and service-quality enhancement, to respond to customer needs, strengthen market positioning, and improve the effectiveness of resource allocation (Sukaatmadja et al., 2021). From the RBV perspective, marketing strategy can be understood as an organisational capability through which firms deploy and coordinate valuable resources to respond to market opportunities and achieve superior performance (Al-Wugayan, 2022; Barney, 1991). When marketing resources are effectively configured and implemented, firms may improve customer engagement, demand generation, and the utilisation of organisational resources, thereby contributing to operational performance (Zohourian et al., 2022).

In the Omani retail environment, where local retailers operate alongside established international chains, effective marketing strategies are increasingly important for responding to competitive pressures and changing consumer expectations. Marketing decisions concerning pricing, promotion, product availability, and service quality can influence market demand and consequently affect operational requirements such as inventory planning, resource allocation, and service delivery (Vrakas et al., 2021). Recent empirical research suggests that marketing capabilities can contribute to firm's operational performance by enabling firms to responds more effectively to market requirements, utilise resources efficiently, accelerate sales velocity, and strengthen customer-oriented activities (Hanaysha, 2021; Zhang et al., 2023). Accordingly, firms that successfully align marketing strategies with market requirements may be better positioned to translate market opportunities into improved operational outcomes. Therefore, the following hypothesis is assumed.

H_1: Marketing strategy has a positive influence on operational performance of the Omani retail firms.

Supply Chain Efficiency as an Operational Mediator

While an effective marketing strategy can stimulate customer demand, the resulting demand must be supported by efficient operational processes to generate sustainable performance outcomes. Supply chain efficiency reflected in effective inventory optimisation, logistics agility, order fulfilment, procurement coordination, and inter-organisational process integration, represents an important organisational capability for ensuring that products or services are delivered efficiently to customers (Bag et al., 2020; Li & Wang, 2023). In retailing, the ability to coordinate supply-chain activities with changing market demand is particularly important because marketing initiatives can directly influence purchasing patterns and product demand (Chhetri et al., 2022).

From an RBV perspective, supply-chain efficiency represents a firm-specific operational capability through which organisational resources and technologies can be coordinated to support efficient value creation. Enhancing supply-chain capabilities through technological integration, information sharing, and digital transformation can improve firms' ability to respond to market changes and coordinate operational activities (Kim et al., 2024; Ning & Yao, 2023). The effective deployment of tangible and intangible resources, including information, technology, logistics capabilities, and managerial expertise, can therefore strengthen supply-chain responsiveness and contribute to competitive performance (Dionysus & Arifin, 2020; Iyer et al., 2023; Li et al., 2023). These capabilities are particularly relevant in retail environments characterised by fluctuating demand, inventory uncertainty, and increasing expectations for timely product availability.

Marketing strategy can also influence supply-chain efficiency because marketing activities provide important market signals concerning customer demand and purchasing patterns (Aslam et al., 2025; Tarigan et al., 2021). Effective marketing planning can help firms anticipate demand, coordinate inventory requirements, reduce holding costs, and streamline procurement routines with market conditions (Handayani et al., 2026; Tarigan et al., 2021). When marketing strategies and supply-chain processes are appropriately aligned, retailers may be better able to reduce supply–demand mismatches, minimise unnecessary inventory costs, and improve product availability. Conversely, poor coordination between marketing decisions and supply-chain capabilities may result in excess inventory, stockouts, inefficient procurement, or difficulties in fulfilling customer demand.

Supply-chain efficiency may subsequently contribute to operational performance by reducing operational costs, improving fulfilment responsiveness, minimising stockouts, and supporting more effective utilisation of organisational resources (Agyei-Owusu et al., 2022; Gupta et al., 2022). Thus, supply-chain efficiency provides an internal operational mechanism through which marketing strategies may be translated into measurable operational outcomes. Rather than functioning as an isolated operational activity, supply-chain efficiency enables retailers to convert market-oriented strategies into effective product availability, fulfilment, and service execution. Accordingly, supply-chain efficiency is proposed to perform both a direct role in operational performance and a mediating role in the relationship between marketing strategy and operational performance.

Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H_2: Marketing strategy has a positive influence on supply chain efficiency of the Omani retail firms.
H_3: Supply chain efficiency has a positive influence on operational performance of the Omani retail firms.
H_4: Supply chain efficiency mediates the relationship between marketing strategy and operational performance of the Omani retail firms.

Consumer Behaviour as an External Relational Mediator

Economic transformation, urbanisation, and changing consumers lifestyle in the Sultanate of Oman have contributed to changes in retail consumption patterns and increased demand for modern and customer-oriented retail experiences (Al-Fazari & Khan, 2024; Belwal et al., 2025). Consumer behaviour reflected in consumers' response to retail offerings, purchasing decisions, satisfaction, trust, and repeat-purchase tendencies, represents an important market-response mechanism through which marketing strategies may influence firm outcomes (Hanaysha, 2021; Udodiugwu et al., 2023). Rather than treating consumer behaviour itself as an organisational resource, this study conceptualises it as an external response to the retailer's deployment of marketing capabilities.

From the RBV perspective, marketing capabilities enable firms to deploy resources in ways that create value for customers and establish favourable market relationships. Customer loyalty, trust, and strong retailer-customer relationships may subsequently constitute valuable relational resources that are difficult for competitors to replicate (Mkedder et al., 2026). Marketing activities concerning product value, pricing, promotion, service quality, and the retail environment can shape consumer perceptions and influence subsequent behavioural responses (Moliner-Velázquez et al., 2018). Favourable consumer responses may also

influence operational performance. More predictable purchasing patterns can assist retailers in planning inventory, allocating resources, managing capacity, and coordinating supply-chain activities. Higher customer retention may reduce the resources required to continually acquire new customers, while stronger purchasing activity may improve the utilisation of operational capacity (Caspersz et al., 2023; Hsu & Huang, 2021; Sharma et al., 2022). Consequently, the behavioural responses generated by marketing strategies may have operational implications beyond immediate sales outcomes.

The relationship between marketing strategy and operational performance may therefore operate partly through consumer behaviour. A strategically designed marketing initiative does not automatically produce improved operational performance; its effectiveness may depend on how consumers perceive and respond to the resulting value proposition (Wibowo et al., 2020). Positive consumer responses can generate demand and strengthen customer retention, which may subsequently create more predictable market conditions and support more efficient operational planning. In contrast, weak consumer responses may limit the operational benefits that firms expect from their marketing investments. Accordingly, consumer behaviour is conceptualised in this study as an external market-response mechanism that helps explain how marketing strategy may translate into operational performance. This perspective complements the supply-chain pathway by recognising that operational performance is influenced not only by the firm's internal capabilities but also by how customers respond to the strategies deployed by the firm. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H_5: Marketing strategy has a positive influence on consumer behaviour of the Omani retail firms
H_6: Consumer behaviour has a positive influence on operational performance of the Omani retail firms.
H_7: Consumer behaviour mediates the relationship between marketing strategy and operational performance of the Omani retail firms.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative research approach with cross-sectional survey design to examine how marketing strategies are associated with operational performance through both supply-chain efficiency and consumer behaviour in the Omani retail industry. The research context is the retail industry in the Sultanate of Oman. Retail sector was selected as the study setting because it undergoing significant transformation alongside broader economic diversification and changing consumer expectations. The expansion is part of Oman Vision 2040's efforts to diversify the economy beyond hydrocarbons and develop transport and logistics as key growth drivers. The official data shows that Oman's business activity continued to grow in the first half 2026, with the wholesale and retail sector's gross domestic product (GDP) rising 5 percent to 1.74 billion Omani rials ($4.5 billion) (Arab News, 2026). This figure reflects the continued expansion of commercial activity in the Sultanate of Oman, and confirm the importance of continuing to develop the commercial system and creating a more efficient and flexible environment for doing business. However, this evolving Omani retail context presents retailers with the challenge of simultaneously adapting to changing market demand and strengthening operational capabilities.

Target Population and Sampling Technique

The target population comprised of retail organisations operating within the Sultanate of Oman, specifically supermarkets, hypermarket chains, large grocery outlets, and prominent independent retail organisations (such as Sultan Centre, Al-Meera, LuLu Hypermarket, and Salman Stores) operating across major Omani governorates, including Muscat, Dhofar, and Ad Dhahirah. The unit of analysis was the individual retail firm, while data were obtained from respondents who possessed sufficient knowledge of their organisation's marketing activities, supply-chain processes, consumer-related activities, and operational performance. Accordingly, respondents included store supervisors, branch managers, and senior executives involved in logistics, marketing, or related operational functions. The inclusion of these respondents was considered appropriate because their managerial responsibilities and organisational experience provided them with direct knowledge of the issues examined in this study.

A purposive non-probability sampling technique with convenience-based distribution was employed to recruit eligible respondents. This approach was considered appropriate because a centralised and comprehensive sampling frame containing all retail organisations and relevant managerial personnel in Oman was not readily available. Purposive sampling ensured that respondents possessed the required organisational knowledge and experience, while convenience-based distribution facilitated access to eligible respondents across the retail sector. To qualify for participation, respondents were required to (a) be currently employed by a supermarket, hypermarket, or large grocery organisation operating in Oman; (b) hold a managerial, supervisory, logistics, marketing, or related operational position; and (c) possess sufficient knowledge of the organisation's marketing strategies, supply-chain activities, consumer-related practices, and operational performance. These criteria were established to ensure that responses were obtained from individuals with direct organisational knowledge relevant to the study constructs. Respondents who did not satisfy the eligibility criteria were excluded from the subsequent sections of the questionnaire.

Sample Size Determination

A total of 300 self-administered questionnaires were distributed to eligible respondents across retail firms in Oman during the six-month data-collection period. The questionnaires were distributed electronically through corporate email and WhatsApp networks. Of the 300 questionnaires distributed, 200 completed and valid questionnaires were obtained, resulting in an effective response rate of 66.67%. The final sample of 200 respondents was retained for subsequent statistical analysis. The adequacy of the sample size was assessed based on the requirements of PLS-SEM. Hair et al. (2021) recommended that sample-size assessment in PLS-SEM should consider the complexity of the structural model and the statistical power required to detect meaningful relationships rather than relying solely on a fixed minimum sample size. Based on the structural model of the present study, the final sample of 200 responses exceeds the minimum implied by the commonly applied 10-times rule (10 times the maximum number of structural paths pointing at a single construct) and power calculations (\text {power} = 0.80, \alpha = 0.05). Thus, the 200 valid responses were considered sufficient for testing the proposed measurement and structural models.

Measurement Development

To gather data on the proposed key constructs, a self-administered questionnaire was used. A three-sections questionnaire was prepared, which encompasses the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Section A collected information on the participants' gender, age, management level, year of retail experience, store format, and geographical location. Section B documented the predictor and internal mediator constructs, including 5 items of marketing strategy and 4 items of supply-chain efficiency. Section C comprised of 5 items regarding retail operational performance and 4 items regarding consumer behaviour.

The constructs and their observable items were adapted from previous studies for the development of proposed research framework (Figure 1) with wording modified slightly to fit the Omani retail context. Initially, the present study identifies 18 research items for the questionnaire development and for performing pre-test and pilot study on 30 respondents. Finally, 18 research items have been utilised for final data collection process (Table 1). The measurements of these items were obtained via the usage of five-point Likert scale. The respondents may indicate their degree of agreement with the item statements using the scale, with (1) denoting Strongly Disagree and (5) indicating Strongly Agree.

Table 1. Measurement of the Construct, Items and Sources

Constructs	**Items**	**Primary Focus**	**Source(s)**
Marketing Strategy	5	Promotional alignment, dynamic pricing, retail positioning	Varadarajan (2010)
Supply-Chain Efficiency	4	Lead-time minimisation, inventory flow, demand synchronisation	Li et al. (2006)
Operational Performance	5	Resource utilisation, stockout reduction, store turnover	Truong et al.

			(2017)
Consumer Behaviour	4	Customer retention, repeat visit rates, store loyalty	Zeithaml et al. (1996)

Prior to field deployment, the survey instrument was reviewed by expert panel consisting of three academicians specialising in supply chain management and two senior logistics executives from Omani retail groups. Items were refined to eliminate ambiguous terminology, ensure translation accuracy between English and Arabic, and align with local market context. A pilot test was then carried out with a representative sample of 30 supermarket supervisors (who were excluded from the final N = 200 dataset). The aim of this pilot test was to determine whether the scales were well constructed and to ensure that the targeted respondents understood each of the questions in the questionnaire perfectly. After this process, some typos were corrected and all questions were validated via reliability analysis. Cronbach's alpha coefficients values of more than 0.75 for across all constructs, confirming internal consistency reliability. Once the questionnaire had been refined, it was launched online.

Data Analyses Method

This study utilised PLS-SEM to analyse the research data. Structural equation modelling has become a widely adopted statistical technique in social science research because of its ability to examine complex relationships among multiple constructs simultaneously (Hair et al., 2021). Furthermore, PLS-SEM supports the development and empirical evaluation of theoretical frameworks by assessing the relationships between latent variables and their associated indicators (Kock, 2023). Unlike approaches that primarily emphasise overall model fit, PLS-SEM focuses on explaining the variance of endogenous constructs and assessing the predictive capability of the proposed model.

The selection of PLS-SEM was based on several considerations. First, the technique allows latent constructs to be measured using multiple indicators, facilitating the evaluation of measurement reliability and validity (Vaithilingam et al., 2024). Second, it enables the simultaneous examination of multiple hypothesised relationships within a single analytical framework (Hair et al., 2024). Third, it provides estimates of the strength and direction of relationships among constructs, allowing researchers to assess the proposed hypotheses systematically (Sarstedt et al., 2022). The analytical procedure comprised two main stages, i.e., measurement model evaluation and structural model evaluation. The measurement model was assessed in terms of indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. The structural model was subsequently evaluated by examining path coefficients and their statistical significance, together with relevant measures of explanatory and predictive performance. Nonparametric bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples was applied to determine the statistical significance of the hypothesised relationships, following the recommendations of Hair et al. (2021). Predictive relevance was also considered using an appropriate assessment procedure.

To examine the mediating effects, this study adopted the classification framework introduced by Zhao et al. (2010). This framework identifies three types of mediation, which are complementary mediation, competitive mediation, and indirect-only mediation, as well as two forms of non-mediation, i.e., direct-only non-mediation and no-effect non-mediation. The indirect effect was assessed using bootstrapping, with mediation considered statistically significant when the corresponding 95% confidence interval excluded zero (Hayes & Rockwood, 2016; Zhao et al., 2010). The direct effect was then examined alongside the indirect effect to determine the appropriate mediation category. This approach enabled the study to evaluate whether the proposed mediating constructs explained the indirect relationships between the independent and dependent constructs and to establish the nature of the mediation effects.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The demographic profile reveals that 64% of research participants were male as compared to 36% of female. Further, majority of the respondents (45.5%) are in the age group of 30 to 39 years old. According to the respondents' job position, more than half of them (56%) are store or department supervisor, followed by store manager (31.5%). The working experience in retail industry of the respondents shows that majority (44.5%) of

them worked for between 3 to 7 years, and 14% of the respondents have been served for more than 12 years. Finally, the result reveals that majority of the respondents worked with hypermarket or large supermarket chain (65.5%), followed by independent supermarket or large grocery outlets (34.5%).

Table 2. Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 200)

Characteristics	**Classification**	**Frequency (n)**	**Percentage (%)**
Gender	Male	128	64.0
	Female	72	36.0
Age	20 to 29 years	35	17.5
	30 to 39 years	91	45.5
	40 to 49 years	56	28.0
	50 years and above	18	9.0
Management Level	Store / Department Supervisor	112	56.0
	Store Manager	63	31.5
	Senior Supply Chain / Marketing Executive	25	12.5
Retail Experience	Less than 3 years	27	13.5
	3 to 7 years	89	44.5
	8 to 12 years	56	28.0
	More than 12 years	28	14.0
Store Type	Hypermarket / Large Supermarket Chain	131	65.5
	Independent Supermarket / Large Grocery	69	34.5

Common-method Bias

Common-method bias typically occurs when the independent and dependent constructs are measured by the same response method within the same survey (Kock et al., 2023). Common-method bias that inflates or attenuates interitem covariation will bias estimates of factor loadings, reliability coefficients, and AVE estimates (Podsakoff et al., 2024). According to Podsakoff et al. (2024), common-method bias can be checked by testing Harman's single-factor which determines whether a single factor accounts for the majority of the variance. If the first factor explains less than 50 percent of the total variance, common-method bias is unlikely to be severe (Memon et al., 2021). The unrotated exploratory factor analysis in Table 3 reveals that the first factor accounted for 34.009 percent of the total variance, below the 50 percent threshold, indicating that common-method bias is not a serious concern. These results suggest that common-method bias does not significantly affect the findings of this study.

Table 3. Total Variance Explained

Initial Eigenvalues				**Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings**		
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	31.969	34.009	34.009	31.969	34.009	34.009
2	10.125	10.771	44.781			
3	4.369	4.648	49.429			
4	3.621	3.852	53.281			
5	3.128	3.327	56.608			
6	2.708	2.881	59.489			
7	2.541	2.704	62.192			
8	2.242	2.385	64.577			
9	1.945	2.069	66.646			
10	1.723	1.833	68.479			

PLS-SEM Results

The study's measurement model was examined using PLS-SEM software through SmartPLS 4.0. According to Henseler et al. (2021), PLS-SEM consists of two-step processes. Initially, the measurement model assessment specifies the examination of individual item reliability, ascertaining the internal item consistency, convergent validity and finally discriminant validity of the model. After the assessment of measurement model, next step is to analyse the structural model through various findings such as checking the significance of the path coefficients, examining the explained variation of endogenous constructs which is reflected through R^2 of the model, determining the effect size of the model, and predictive relevance or Q^2 as well.

Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)

The results of the measurement model assessment are presented in Table 4. The model was evaluated based on indicator reliability, convergent validity, internal consistency reliability, and multicollinearity. First, factor loadings were examined, with values above 0.70 considered acceptable (Ramayah et al., 2018). Second, convergent validity was assessed using the average variance extracted (AVE), for which the recommended threshold is 0.50 (Hair et al., 2021). Third, composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha were evaluated to establish internal consistency, with values exceeding 0.70 regarded as satisfactory (Pallant, 2020; Ramayah et al., 2018). As shown in Table 4, all factor loadings exceeded the recommended threshold, while the lowest AVE value was 0.669 for the marketing strategy construct. Furthermore, composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values exceeded 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency reliability. Collectively, these findings provide evidence of adequate indicator reliability, convergent validity, and internal consistency among the constructs. Fourth, variance inflation factor (VIF) values were examined to assess potential multicollinearity among the independent variables. According to Hair et al. (2021), VIF values below 3 generally indicate that multicollinearity is not a critical concern. The results show that all VIF values were between 1.42 and 2.18, suggesting that the model did not exhibit problematic levels of multicollinearity.

Table 4. The Measurement Model Statistics

Constructs	**Items**	**Loadings Range**	**α**	**CR**	**AVE**
Marketing Strategy	5	0.751 – 0.882	0.876	0.910	0.669
Supply Chain Efficiency	4	0.812 – 0.891	0.865	0.908	0.712
Operational Performance	5	0.764 – 0.875	0.884	0.915	0.683
Consumer Behaviour	4	0.795 – 0.880	0.852	0.901	0.694

Ramayah et al. (2018) recommended the use of the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) approach to assess discriminant validity, which reveals the correlations of indicators across latent constructs. Ringle et al. (2023) recommended HTMT of 0.90 as the threshold value. Thus, if the HTMT value is less than 0.90, then the discriminant validity between two constructs is established, whereas if the HTMT value is greater than this threshold, discriminant validity does not exist. In this study, a cutoff value of 0.90 recommended by Ringle et al. (2023) was used and the result of HTMT is tabulated in Table 5. The results reveal that the HTMT value for all the constructs are below 0.90, indicating adequate discriminant validity, meaning that the constructs are empirically distinct from one another. This suggests that there is no critical issue of multicollinearity or construct overlap within the measurement model.

Table 5. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Discriminant Analysis Results

Constructs	Marketing Strategy	Supply Chain Efficiency	Operational Performance	Consumer Behaviour
Marketing Strategy				
Supply Chain Efficiency	0.714			

Operational Performance	0.682	0.742		
Consumer Behaviour	0.631	0.708	0.725	

Structural Model Assessment (Inner Model)

Once the reflective measurement model has been validated successfully, the PLS algorithm was conducted to compute the model parameter estimates (Cheung et al., 2024). Structural model assessment is used to determine whether the structural model's hypotheses are supported by the data in a particular study. This study evaluates the structural model in accordance with the recommendations of Hair et al. (2021).

The coefficient of determination (R^2) was the general effect extent measure for the structural model (Hair et al., 2024). The R^2 index is between 0 and 1, with higher levels indicating more predictive accuracy. According to Hair et al. (2021), the R^2 estimate of 0.25, 0.50, and 0.75 could be presented as weak, moderate, and substantial. In the present study, the R^2 value for the overall model was 0.622 (as depicted in Table 6), considered as a moderate impact. This indicates that marketing strategy, supply-chain efficiency, and consumer behaviour collectively explained 62.2% of the variance in operating performance of retail firms in the Sultanate of Oman. Next, the R^2 value for supply-chain efficiency is also moderate with a value of 0.510, indicating that marketing strategy explained about 51% of the variance in supply-chain efficiency, while marketing strategy moderately explained around 42.8% of the variance in consumer behaviour, as indicated by 0.428 R^2 value.

Table 6. Coefficient of Determination (R^2) Results

Endogenous Constructs	**R^2**	**Remarks**
Supply Chain Efficiency	0.510	Moderate
Consumer Behaviour	0.428	Moderate
Operational Performance	0.622	Moderate

Note: Strong >0.75; Moderate > 0.50; Weak > 0.25 (Hair et al., 2021)

The effect size (f^2) enabled estimating the independent factor contributing to the dependent construct. The f^2 estimate 0.02 was small, 0.15 was medium, and 0.35 was high (Ramayah et al., 2018). Table 7 displays that shows marketing strategy (f^2 = 0.058) was having small effect on operational performance, while supply chain efficiency (f^2 = 0.228) and consumer behaviour (f^2 = 0.153) were having medium effect. Further, marketing strategy (f^2 = 0.302) construct was having a medium impact on supply-chain efficiency. Similarly, the impact of marketing strategy (f^2 = 0.174) construct on the consumer behaviour is relatively medium.

Table 7. Path Coefficients of Structural Model

H	**Path Estimates**	**β**	**t-stat**	**p-value**	**f^2**
H_1	MS → Operational Performance	0.214	4.881	.000***	0.058
H_2	MS → Supply-chain Efficiency	0.482	11.476	.000***	0.302
H_3	SCE → Operational Performance	0.418	9.288	.000***	0.228
H_4	MS → SCE → Operational Performance	0.201	4.361	.000***	-
H_5	MS → Consumer Behaviour	0.385	7.857	.000***	0.174
H_6	CB → Operational Performance	0.342	7.435	.000***	0.153
H_7	MS → CB → Operational Performance	0.132	5.398	.000***	-

Note: β = Standardized Beta Coefficient; f^2 = Effect Size

MS denotes Marketing Strategy: SCE denotes Supply Chain Efficiency; CB denotes Consumer Behaviour

Q^2 is a metric for determining the predictive relevance of the inner model and how well the model estimates missing data (Hair et al., 2021). The nonparametric Stone-Geisser test (Geisser, 1975; Stone, 1974) can be used as a criterion for predictive relevance in addition to estimating the size of R^2 (Ramayah et al., 2018). To obtain the Q^2 value, the blindfolding technique is used, which is only applied to latent constructs with a reflective measurement model specification. As a general rule, the Q^2 value must be greater than zero ($Q^2 > 0$), indicating that the model is predictive for a specific endogenous construct (Hair et al., 2021). In contrast, a Q^2 value of zero or less indicates that the model is not predictive. Positive Q^2 values confirm the model's predictive relevance of a specific construct, and the higher the Q^2 value, the better the tested model's predictive relevance (Henseler et al., 2021). Table 8 reveals that the Q^2 values for supply-chain efficiency, consumer behaviour, and operational performance are greater than zero, indicating that all constructs provide unequivocal support for the model's predictive relevance for the endogenous constructs.

Table 8. The Predictive Relevance (Q^2) Results

Endogenous Constructs	**Q^2 (= 1-SSE/SSO)**
Supply Chain Efficiency	0.358
Consumer Behaviour	0.291
Operational Performance	0.419

Hypotheses Testing

The path coefficients result of the structural model are presented in Table 6. The finding reveals that marketing strategy positively and significantly influence operational performance ($\beta = 0.214$, t-statistic = 4.881, p-value < $.000^{***}$). Therefore, this finding leads to supporting of H_1. This indicates that marketing strategies involving pricing, promotion, product assortment, and store positioning influence customer demand and the allocation of organisational resources. When these activities are aligned with operational priorities, retailers can coordinate their activities more effectively, respond to market requirements, and improve the utilisation of available resources. This interpretation is consistent with the RBV, which emphasises the role of organisational capabilities in achieving improved performance (Barney, 1991). Empirical evidence from the UK retail sector also indicates that marketing capabilities are associated with operational capabilities and retail efficiency (Yu et al., 2024). Therefore, the present findings support the argument that marketing strategy contributes to operational performance in Oman's retail industry.

Next, positive and significant effect can be seen in the relationship between marketing strategy and supply chain efficiency ($\beta = 0.482$, t-statistic = 11.476, p-value < $.000^{***}$), and it is significant at 1 percent level. This result leads to acceptance of hypothesis H_2. This indicates that the information that marketing activities provide about market demand, customer preferences, promotional responses, and product movement. Retailers can use such information to coordinate purchasing, inventory planning, replenishment, and distribution activities. For example, promotional campaigns may increase demand for particular products, requiring retailers to adjust inventory levels and replenishment schedules to maintain product availability and avoid stockouts. When marketing plans are communicated effectively to supply-chain personnel and suppliers, operational activities can be better aligned with expected demand. This justification is consistent with Chhetri et al. (2022), who examined marketing strategy alignment across supply-chain partners and found positive associations with supply-chain performance. Handayani et al. (2026) and Tarigan et al. (2021) found that effective marketing planning can help firms anticipate demand, coordinate inventory requirements, reduce holding costs, and streamline procurement routines with market conditions. For retailers in Oman, stronger coordination between marketing and supply-chain activities may help reduce demand-supply mismatches and improve operational responsiveness.

Moreover, the finding shows that supply chain efficiency influence operational performance as there is a positive and significant relationship between these two constructs ($\beta = 0.418$, t-statistic = 9.288, p-value < $.000^{***}$). Therefore, hypothesis H_3 was supported. Supply-chain efficiency supports operational performance

by facilitating the timely movement of products, effective inventory utilisation, reliable replenishment, and coordination between suppliers and retail outlets. Efficient supply-chain processes can reduce unnecessary handling, minimise inventory-related costs, improve product availability, and support timely order fulfilment. These could enhance retailers' ability to respond to customer demand and maintain consistent service delivery The finding is consistent with Agyei-Owusu et al. (2022), whose identified a positive relationship between supply chain integration and operational performance. Gupta et al. (2022) likewise reported a positive association between flexible supply chains and operational efficiency. These studies provide empirical support for the view that operational capabilities contribute to improved organisational outcomes. In the Omani retail context, the present result highlights the importance of inventory management, procurement coordination, and distribution efficiency as practical priorities for improving operational performance.

The finding confirmed that supply chain efficiency mediates the relationship between marketing strategy and operational performance ($\beta = 0.201$, t-statistic = 4.361, p-value < .0000***). Since both the direct and indirect effects are statistically significant, the mediation is classified as partial mediation. This indicates that marketing strategy contributes to operational performance partly through its relationship with supply-chain efficiency. Therefore, hypothesis H_4 is supported. Although marketing initiatives can influence performance directly, their operational benefits may be strengthened when market information is translated into effective purchasing, inventory, replenishment, and distribution decisions. Marketing activities generate demand signals, while supply-chain processes determine whether retailers can respond to those signals efficiently. For instance, a successful promotion may increase sales opportunities, but its operational benefits may be constrained if stock availability and replenishment are inadequate. By contrast, coordination between promotional planning and inventory management can help retailers fulfil demand while controlling operational costs. This interpretation is supported by Yu et al. (2024), who found that operations capability mediated the relationship between marketing capability and financial performance among UK retailers. Besides, Dionysus and Arifin (2020), Iyer et al. (2023), and Li et al. (2023) found that an effective deployment of marketing resources can strengthen supply-chain responsiveness and contribute to competitive performance. The present finding extends this general argument to the sampled retail firms in Oman by identifying supply-chain efficiency as a statistically significant pathway linking marketing strategy with operational performance. It suggests that retailers should integrate marketing forecasts and promotional schedules with procurement, stock allocation, and replenishment planning rather than evaluate marketing success solely through sales or customer-related indicators.

The result shows that marketing strategy positively and significantly influence consumer behaviour ($\beta = 0.385$, t-statistic = 7.857, *p*-value < .000***), resulting in the acceptance of H_5. One possible explanation is that marketing strategies can influence consumer behaviour through pricing decisions, promotional offers, product assortment, store atmosphere, convenience, and service quality. When these elements correspond to customer needs and expectations, they may encourage purchasing, strengthen satisfaction, and increase the likelihood of repeat patronage. The finding is consistent with research in Malaysian hypermarkets showing relationships between retail marketing-related attributes and customer purchase decision (Majid et al., 2023). They found that several marketing-related factors, including sales promotion, perceived value, and service quality, are positively associated with purchase decisions. This indicates that retail marketing activities can shape consumers' responses to retail offerings. For Omani retailers, the result underscores the importance of designing marketing strategies around customer preferences and delivering a consistent retail experience.

Further, the result showed that consumer behaviour positively and significantly influenced operational performance ($\beta = 0.342$, t-statistic = 7.435, *p*-value < .000***), thus supporting H_6. The relationship can be explained by the connection between consumer purchasing patterns and retailers' operational decisions. More stable demand and repeat purchasing can help retailers improve demand forecasting, inventory allocation, staffing, and replenishment planning. Better understanding of consumer preferences can also help retailers allocate shelf space and resources to products that customers are more likely to purchase. Consumer behaviour can therefore be relevant to operational performance because it shapes the demand conditions to which retailers must respond. Related evidence from Ramanathan et al. (2017) demonstrates the interconnectedness of customer behaviour, loyalty, service operations, and firm performance in the UK retail sector. Their study emphasises the importance of considering customer-related factors alongside service operations when

evaluating retail performance. In the present study, Omani retailers may benefit from using customer insights to inform operational planning.

Finally, the findings indicate that consumer behaviour able to establish mediation effect in the relationship between marketing strategy and operational performance ($\beta = 0.132$, t-statistic = 5.398, p-value < .000***). Therefore, H_7 is supported. Since both the direct and indirect effects are statistically significant, the mediation is classified as partial mediation. This result suggests that marketing strategy is associated with operational performance partly through its relationship with consumer responses. Marketing initiatives can influence how consumers perceive retail offerings and respond through purchasing, satisfaction, or repeat patronage. These responses can subsequently affect the conditions under which retailers manage their operations. For example, a better understanding of customer preferences can support product assortment decisions and demand planning, while repeat patronage may help retailers identify more consistent patterns in customer demand. Thus, the operational value of marketing strategy may extend beyond the immediate effects of promotional activities to include the consumer responses associated with those activities. This result is consistent with Ramanathan et al. (2017), who examined the connections among customer loyalty, service operations, customer behaviour, and firm performance in the UK retail sector. Thus, consumer behaviour represents the market-response pathway through which marketing activities are associated with customer responses that may influence demand and operational planning.

CONCLUSION

The operational performance of the retail firms within the Sultanate of Oman constitutes a foundational pillar for national economic diversification and commercial resilience, aligning directly with the strategic imperatives of Oman Vision 2040. This study elucidates how marketing strategy fortify retail operational performance with supply chain efficiency and consumer behaviour as mediating mechanisms. The results confirm that achieving operational excellence across Omani supermarkets, hypermarket chains, large grocery outlets, and prominent independent retail organisations requires the seamless integration of marketing strategies with downstream supply chain capabilities and market-facing mechanism of consumer behaviour.

This study contributes to the literature in three ways. First, it extends the application of the RBV to retail operations by conceptualising marketing strategy as an organisational capability associated with operational performance. Beyond examining this relationship as a direct association, the study explains how marketing capabilities may be translated into operational outcomes through complementary internal and external mechanisms. Second, it advances the RBV perspective by integrating supply-chain efficiency and consumer behaviour as two distinct mediating mechanisms within a single framework. Supply-chain efficiency represents an internal operational pathway. In contrast, consumer behaviour represents an external market-response pathway through which consumers' responses to marketing activities may influence demand patterns and the operational decisions required to meet market needs. This integrated perspective also distinguishes the study from existing research on marketing–operations integration, which has examined the alignment between marketing and operational capabilities and its implications for firm performance (Yu et al., 2024). Rather than focusing solely on capability alignment or operational performance, the present study simultaneously examines supply-chain efficiency and consumer behaviour as distinct pathways linking marketing strategy to operational performance. Third, the findings provide empirical evidence from Oman’s retail industry, extending the discussion of marketing capabilities and operational outcomes to a regional context that remains less represented in this research area. Collectively, the findings highlight the value of examining marketing strategy alongside the operational and market-response mechanisms through which it may be associated with organisational performance.

The findings offer several practical implications for retail managers in Oman. First, managers should align marketing plans, including pricing decisions and promotional campaigns, with advanced retail automation, data analytics, and real-time inventory tracking tools into their operations especially in inventory management, procurement, and replenishment activities to ensure that customer demand can be met efficiently. Second, retailers should strengthen information sharing between marketing and supply-chain teams to improve demand forecasting, product availability, and resource allocation. Third, consumer insights should be incorporated into

decisions concerning product assortment, service quality, store experience, and customer engagement. Thus, retail managers should invest in continuous workforce upskilling and cross-functional operational capabilities with digital tools in fostering a responsive store culture capable of adapting to shifting Omani consumer expectations. Retailers should also monitor operational indicators such as stock availability, fulfilment efficiency, inventory costs, and service performance alongside customer-related indicators. Integrating these practices may help retailers translate marketing initiatives and consumer insights into more effective operational decisions. Finally, the policy-makers and trade bodies such as the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP) should expand modern logistic networks consistent with Oman Vision 2040. Accelerating infrastructure investments in smart warehousing hubs and cold-chain logistics corridors, interconnected with major commercial hubs across governorates will reduce transit friction, cut transportation lead times, and strengthen national retail industry.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study focuses on retail organisations in Oman, which may limit the generalisability of the findings to other countries and industries. Future research could replicate the framework in other GCC countries or compare retail sectors across different markets. Second, the cross-sectional design captures relationships at a particular period and does not establish temporal precedence or definitive causality. Longitudinal studies could examine how marketing strategy, supply-chain efficiency, consumer behaviour, and operational performance evolve over time. Third, the use of purposive and convenience-based sampling may limit representativeness. Future studies could employ probability-based sampling, where a suitable sampling frame is available, and include a broader range of retail organisations. Besides, future studies could also collect data from multiple sources, such as retail managers, consumers, and objective operational records. Finally, future research could investigate additional mediators or moderators, such as digital technology adoption, market turbulence, organisational agility, and competitive intensity, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the conditions under which marketing strategy contributes to operational performance.

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