Abant Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi

Journal of Abant Social Sciences

2025, 25(1): 365-389, doi: 10.11616/asbi.1585798

A Literature Review on the Emerging Trends of AI Applications in E-Retailing: Insights from the Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services

E-Perakendecilikte Yapay Zeka Uygulamalarındaki Yeni Eğilimler Üzerine Bir Literatür İncelemesi: Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services'ten İçgörüler

Özge HABİBOĞLU[1]

Geliş Tarihi (*Received*): 15.11.2024 **Kabul Tarihi (*Accepted*):** 29.01.2025 **Yayın Tarihi (*Published*):** 25.03.2025

Abstract: The use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the retail sector is steadily increasing. This study aims to analyze how the use of artificial intelligence in retail has been addressed academically over the years and to explore the key research focuses in this area. For this purpose, 137 studies published in the *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*[2] were analyzed according to SPAR-4-SLR protocol. The reviewed studies were analyzed across four domains: publication year, consumer approach, AI technology applied, and theoretical framework. Findings indicate that most studies were published in 2024, primarily focusing on consumer purchasing behavior, extensive use of chatbots, and frequent application of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) in theoretical grounding. The study's exclusive focus on the retail sector, combined with its approach of examining as many studies as possible with minimal restrictions, contributes to the literature by systematically presenting the current state of research and aims to give researchers a structured understanding of the field's development and key trends.

Keywords: AI, Artificial Intelligence, Retailing, Consumer Behaviour

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Öz: Perakende sektöründe yapay zeka (YZ) kullanımı giderek artmaktadır. Bu çalışma, perakendecilikte yapay zekanın kullanımının yıllar içinde akademik alanda nasıl ele alındığını ve bu alandaki temel araştırma odaklarını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu amaçla, Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services dergisinde yayımlanan 137 çalışma, SPAR-4-SLR protokolüne göre analiz edilmiştir. İncelenen çalışmalar dört alanda analiz edilmiştir: yayın yılı, tüketici yaklaşımı, uygulanan YZ teknolojisi ve teorik çerçeve. Bulgular, çoğu çalışmanın 2024 yılında yayımlandığını, tüketici satın alma davranışına odaklandığını, chatbotların yoğun kullanıldığını ve teorik dayanak olarak sıklıkla Teknoloji Kabul Modeli'nin (TAM) uygulandığını göstermektedir. Çalışmanın yalnızca perakendecilik alanına odaklanması ve az kısıtlama ile mümkün olduğunca çok sayıda çalışmayı incelemesi, araştırmacılara mevcut durumun sistematik bir şekilde tespitini sunarak alanyazına katkı sağlamayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: YZ, Yapay Zeka, Perakendecilik, Tüketici Davranışı

Atıf/Cite as: Habiboğlu, Ö., (2025). A Literature Review on the Emerging Trends of AI Applications in E-Retailing: Insights from the Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services. *Abant Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi, 25(1),* 365-389. doi: 10.11616/asbi.1585798

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[1]Öğr. Gör. Dr., Özge Habiboğlu, Tekirdağ Namık Kemal Üniversitesi, ohabiboglu@nku.edu.tr.

[2] Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services (CiteScore: 20.4) This journal seeks research contributing to the frontiers of retailing and consumer services, based on generalizable empirical results from representative samples. It serves as an international, interdisciplinary forum for research and debate in the rapidly evolving and converging fields of retail and service studies. The focus is on consumer behavior, policy, and managerial decisions, encouraging contributions from diverse academic disciplines. Its scope particularly covers the retailing and selling of goods.

1. Introduction

The retail industry's digital transformation catalyzes a significant shift toward adopting artificial intelligence (AI) to optimize automation within retail environments. Globally, online and offline retailers are integrating AI technologies to enhance customer service, streamline operational efficiency, and improve customer interactions. Cloud infrastructure increasingly supports this technology adoption, enabling seamless and scalable solutions designed to enrich customer experiences. The global AI in the retail market, valued at USD 7.14 billion in 2023, it was estimated at USD 11.61 billion in 2024 and is expected to reach USD 14.49 billion in 2025 (Grand View Research, 2024), reaching an estimated USD 85.07 billion by 2032. Factors driving this growth include the rising application of AI-powered voice and visual search functionalities, which enhance the shopping experience (Fortune, 2024).

Artificial intelligence supports essential value-adding functions in retail by enhancing processes such as inventory and order management, customer service, logistics, distribution, product availability, and financial accounting. Through AI, retailers can optimize stock levels, streamline order placements, personalize customer interactions, improve transportation and delivery systems, ensure timely product availability, and efficiently manage financial transactions, ultimately enhancing operational efficiency and customer satisfaction across the retail ecosystem (Weber & Schütte, 2019). As the number of studies focusing on AI in retail continues to grow, synthesizing this research is essential to identify patterns, gaps, and emerging trends. A systematic literature analysis offers valuable insights into how AI is transforming the retail sector, providing a comprehensive view of its diverse applications and their implications for both businesses and consumers.

This study conducted a systematic literature review to analyze the development of AI applications in the retail sector. Using the SPAR-4-SLR protocol developed by Paul et al. (2021), this review evaluates previous research in terms of publication year, consumer-focused approaches, types of AI applications, and theoretical frameworks employed. The analysis addresses key research questions designed to highlight trends in AI use within retail, providing insights that are particularly valuable given the relatively recent and rapidly evolving nature of this field

- RQ1: What is the yearly distribution of academic studies in this field?
- RQ2: Since retailing is a service sector focused on the end consumer, how do current studies focus on consumer?
- RQ3: Although many products and applications are supported by artificial intelligence, which product stands out in the retail sector?
- RQ4: From a theoretical standpoint, which theories have researchers preferred to use in their studies?

A primary contribution of this study is its response to the limited presence of comprehensive systematic reviews on AI applications within retail. Addressing this gap offers significant value by clarifying AI's transformative role in both retail practices and theoretical advancements. By synthesizing findings in this emerging field, the study not only establishes a foundation for further research but also promotes a nuanced understanding of AI's impact, providing scholars and practitioners with insights for future innovations and investigations.

2. Artificial intelligence's importance in retailing

AI is a system's capacity to accurately interpret external data, learn from it, and apply those insights to accomplish specific goals and tasks through adaptive flexibility (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2019: 17). AI originated from the idea of determining the extent to which machines could partially or fully replicate human capabilities in performing various tasks (Weber & Schütte, 2019: 266).

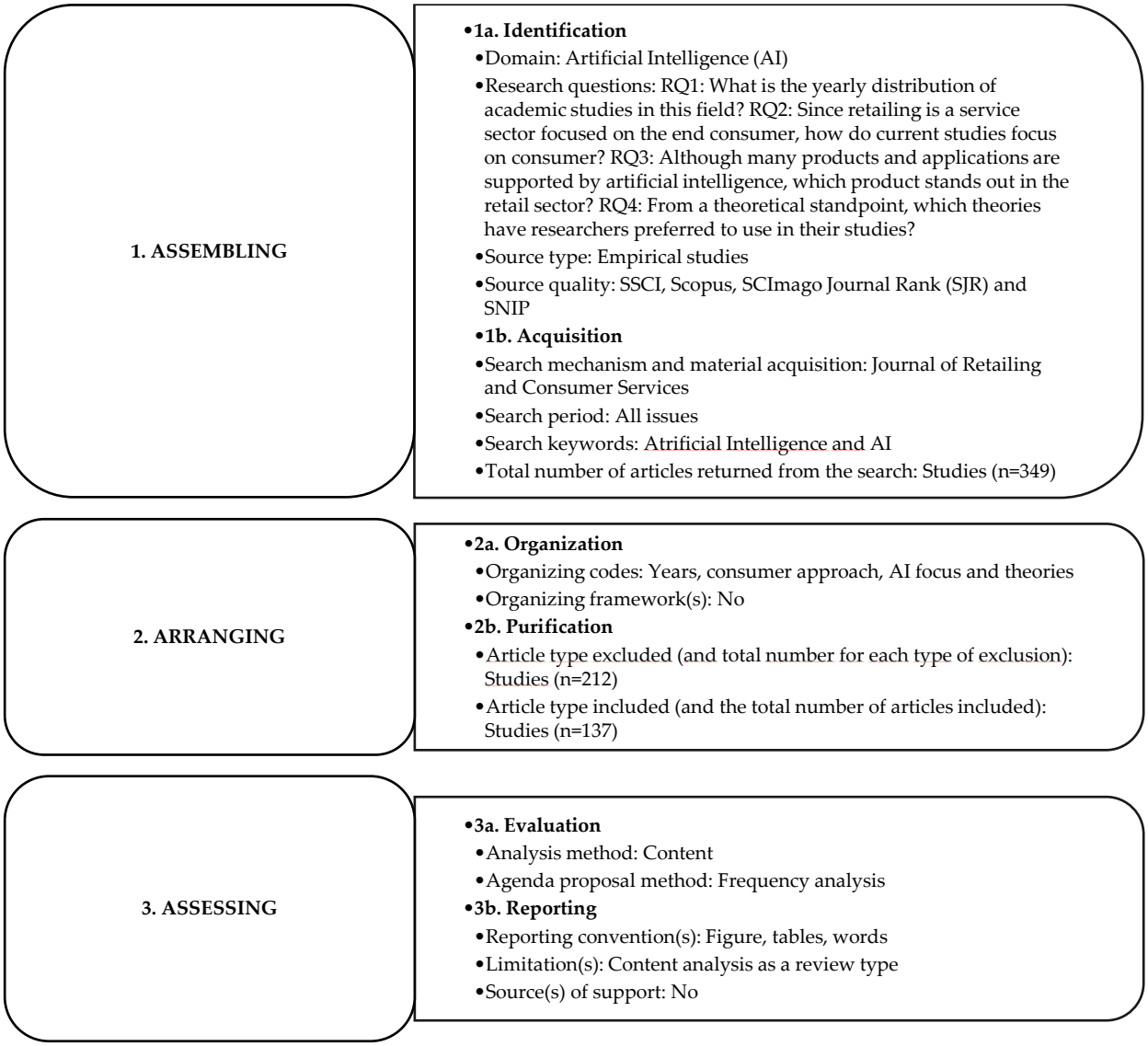
For retailers, AI is highly recommended to enhance understanding of consumer behavior and boost satisfaction levels, as consumers' expectations continue to rise—largely driven by the flexibility and convenience of online shopping, which enables product access anytime, anywhere (Heins, 2023: 264). Gülşen (2019), stated the benefits of AI in retailing; automation in retail processes can enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and increase sales, providing a competitive advantage. It improves customer satisfaction, loyalty, and the shopping experience. Optimized supply chains and logistics, along with advanced sales and inventory management, are achievable through automated solutions. Extensive data analysis allows for faster, more informed decisions while optimizing digital marketing, enabling a seamless omnichannel experience. Technologies like facial recognition and mobile apps can identify customers in physical stores, allowing personalized marketing across physical and online channels, reducing wait times, and enhancing workforce allocation for greater efficiency. In their interviews with retail managers, Guha et al. (2021) underscored the critical role of AI in enhancing consumer interactions across physical and online retail spaces. Their findings highlight AI's importance in improving customer engagement and streamlining personalized experiences, which are increasingly valued in modern retail environments.

Heins (2023), presented a systematic literature review of 118 articles between 2005 and 2021 based on conceptual and theoretical characterization, research topic, AI methods, and techniques in retailing. Haque et al. (2024), conducted bibliometric and content analysis of AI applications in retail marketing data gathered from 50 articles between 2000 and 2023. They focused on six areas: sustainability, consumer behavior, AI in retail marketing, supply chain management, firm performance, and trusts. Sarnıç and Acar (2024) analyzed AI usage across 20 companies, including those in the retail sector, to assess the current state of AI applications and identify their potential for future development. Their study provides insights into how these companies adopt AI, highlights the existing applications in use, and evaluates the opportunities for growth and advancement in AI technology within the field. Studies analyzing the use of AI by retailers through literature reviews are relatively scarce. This study, however, contributes to the literature by examining a broader range of works with fewer constraints, aiming to identify trends in academic research over the years. It adopts an approach focused on the types of AI employed, the consumer-oriented studies conducted, and the theoretical frameworks utilized.

3. Methodology

To ensure rigor, reliability, transparency, and objectivity, the SPAR-4-SLR protocol was implemented in the systematic review process, *as seen in Figure 1.* Specific research questions were formulated, and efforts were made to address these questions through a systematic analysis with SPAR-4_SLR protocol. The protocol is a structured methodology designed to standardize systematic literature reviews, ensuring transparency and consistency. It guides researchers in defining research questions, extracting data, and analyzing findings. However, its effectiveness is influenced by factors such as keyword selection, which may exclude relevant studies due to terminological differences, and access to high-quality academic databases, limiting the review's comprehensiveness. Despite these challenges, SPAR-4-SLR remains a valuable tool for conducting rigorous and thorough reviews across disciplines. *Initially created to aid scholars in consumer studies, the SPAR-4-SLR protocol offers detailed justifications for critical choices within the literature review process and includes practical examples to highlight its application. Paul et al., (2021) states that this framework enables researchers to develop systematic literature reviews (SLRs) that are transparent and reproducible, making it especially beneficial in disciplines requiring rigorous and high-quality reviews, such as business, social sciences, and applied sciences .*

Figure 1: SPAR-4-SLR Protocol Of The Study



Source: Paul et al., 2021:6

The importance of artificial intelligence has been demonstrated by academic research and industry reports. This study aims to answer several questions related to this development (RQ1-2-3-4). Since it is not feasible to examine all studies related to artificial intelligence, the scope of the research was narrowed. This study focuses on AI in the retail sector, so the top journal relevant to this field was used. The Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services was selected, and at the time of the research, the journal's database contained 3,998[3] studies. 349 articles from the journal were identified using only the keywords "AI" and "Artificial Intelligence." Only two keywords, "AI" and "Artificial Intelligence," were selected to focus on the study's central theme and ensure the search captured articles specifically related to the subject matter. This approach minimizes the inclusion of irrelevant results while maintaining a broad scope within the topic of artificial intelligence. These keywords are commonly used by researchers, making them practical for identifying relevant literature in the context of AI applications. Such a streamlined strategy also helps manage and analyze the data efficiently, especially in large-scale reviews. No restrictions were applied regarding publication year or other criteria. In the initial stage, 349 articles accessed through keywords

3 The total number of studies completed by October 2024.

were evaluated regarding AI usage. During this process, studies not directly related to AI or whose examined technology was not AI-based were excluded from the selection. Consequently, only 137 relevant articles were retained for analysis.

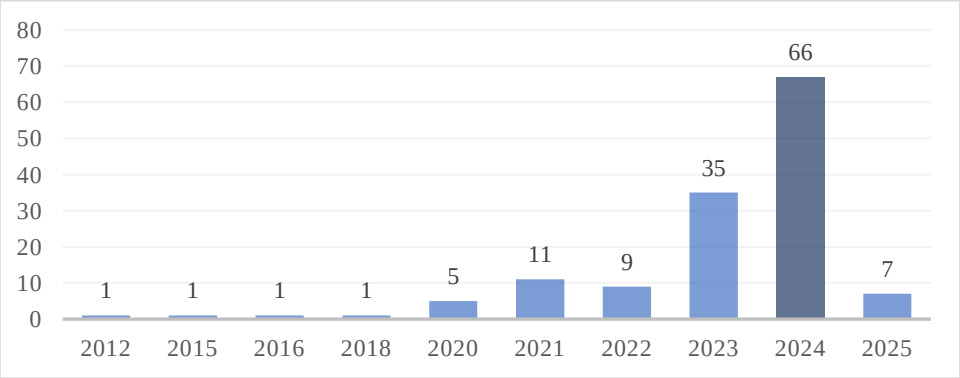
The study data were categorized based on specific features before analysis, including the year, author details, consumer focus, artificial intelligence focus, and applied theories. An academic expert verified these classifications, and the data were finalized through collaborative decision-making. Following this, a frequency analysis was conducted using the SPSS software.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Yearly distribution of academic studies (RQ1)

According to Figure 2, artificial intelligence is a young field of study in retailing, and the studies will accelerate after 2020.

Figure 2: Distribution Of Studies By Year



RQ1 explores the timeline of conducted studies. Analysis results indicate that before 2020, studies on AI were relatively limited; however, they have since progressed with growing momentum, reaching a peak in 2024[4]. Based on these findings, research on AI in the retail sector is anticipated to continue to grow in the coming years.

4.2 Consumer focus of academic studies (RQ2)

The grouping in this table is based on the studies' consumer-oriented approaches, focusing exclusively on the consumer aspects of each study. Although the studies' purposes may vary, most analyzed studies explore a relationship between AI and consumers. Studies in italics within the table are related to AI but do not primarily focus on consumers. According to Table 1, the majority of consumer-focused studies on AI center on purchasing behavior.

Table 1: Frequencies Of Research Consumer Approach

Research consumer approach	Counts	%	Author(s)
Consumer buying behaviour	19	13.9 %	Mohamed Jasim (2024); Sestino (2024); Gallin and Portes (2024); Dabiran et al (2024); Yao et al (2024); Zhang et al (2024); Wang and Qiu (2024); Kim et al (2024); Jiang et al (2024); Bilal et al (2024); Pham et al. (2024); Mkedder et al. (2024); Hu and Ma (2023); Peng et al. (2023); El Hedhli (2023); Li et al. (2023); Guo and Luo (2023); Gao et al. (2023); Lunardo et al (2016)

4 The data was taken in October 2024.

Consumer satisfaction	18	12.4 %	Yi et al. (2025); Chakraborty et al. (2024); Zhou and Chang (2024); Kumar et al. (2024); Xie et al. (2024); Huang et al. (2024); Kim and Park (2024); Niu and Mvondo (2024); Söderlund (2024); Choi et al. (2024); Poushneh et al. (2024); Xu et al. (2023); Le et al. (2023); Song et al. (2023); Oliveira et al. (2023); Hsu and Lin (2023); Ruan and Mezei (2022); Ben Mimoun and Poncin (2015)
Consumer adoption	16	11.7 %	Vinoi et al. (2025); Gao et al. (2025); Shehawy et al. (2025); Wang et al. (2024); Gupta and Rathore (2024); Koh and Yuen (2024); Behera et al. (2024); Park et al. (2024); Schultz and Kumar (2024); Chang and Park (2024); Kamoonpuri and Sengar (2023); Foroughi et al. (2023); Song et al. (2022); Park et al. (2021); Rese at al. (2020); Adapa et al. (2020)
Consumer attitude	13	9.5 %	Li et al. (2024); Molinillo et al. (2024); Deng et al. (2024); Shahzad et al. (2024); Li et al. (2023); Maduku et al. (2023); Li et al. (2023); Huang and Dootson (2022); Yuan et al. (2022); Song and Kim (2021); Chuah and Yu (2021); Silva and Bonetti (2021); Poushneh (2021)
Consumer experience	11	8.0 %	Kervenoael (2024); Aslam and Davis (2024); Wang et al. (2024); Markovitch et al (2024); Xu et al (2024); Aslam (2023); Wang et al. (2023); Rahman et al (2023); Moore et al. (2022); Hsu et al. (2021); Prentice and Nguyen (2020)
*Service employees**	*7*	*5.1 %*	Njoku et al. (2024); Zhou et al. (2024); Huang and Gursoy (2024); Zhao et al (2023); Prentice et al. (2023); Kang et al. (2023); Ben Mimoun et al. (2012)
Consumer engagement	5	3.6 %	Yu et al. (2024); Mehmood et al. (2024); Rohit et al. (2024); Akhtar et al . (2024); Recalde et al. (2024)
Consumer behaviour	5	3.6 %	Kayeser Fatima et al. (2024); Zhang and Wang (2023); Huang (2023); Fan et al. (2022); Chinchanachokchai et al. (2021)
Consumer interaction	5	3.6 %	Zhou et al. (2024); Cheng et al. (2024); Park et al (2023); Soderlund et al. (2021); Poushneh (2021)
Consumer usage intention	5	3.6 %	Xu et al (2024); Yang et al (2024); Jan et al. (2023); Li and Wang (2023); Subero-Navarro et al. (2022)
Consumer perception	3	2.2 %	Lee and Kim (2024); Kang and Shao (2023); Söderlund (2022)
Consumer brand perception	2	1.5 %	Brüns and Meissner (2024); Patrizi et al. (2024)
Comprehending consumer opinions	2	1.5 %	Mustak et al. (2024); Praveen et al. (2024)
Consumer choice	2	1.5 %	Kim et al. (2023); Klaus and Zaichkowsky (2022)
Consumer motivation	2	1.5 %	Caboni et al (2024); Chang and Chen (2021)
Consumer preferences	2	1.5 %	Nam et al. (2025); Park and Ahn (2024)
Consumer switching behaviour	2	1.5 %	Shao (2024); Li and Zhang (2023)
Consumers preferences	2	1.5 %	Wang et al. (2024); Zheng et al. (2024)
Consumer anxiety	1	0.7 %	Deng and Jiang (2023)
Consumer brand loyalty	1	0.7 %	Lee and Li (2023)
Consumer evaluation	1	0.7 %	Zhang and Song (2024)
Consumer expectations	1	0.7 %	Tran et al. (2021)
Consumer intention	1	0.7 %	Pillai et al. (2020)
Consumer resilience	1	0.7 %	Hu and Pan (2023)

Consumer segmentation	1	0.7 %	Li et al. (2025)
Consumer stickiness	1	0.7 %	Pang et al. (2024)
Consumer trust	1	0.7 %	Alboqami (2023)
Consumer's attiribution	1	0.7 %	Liu and Lee (2024)
*Retailer location**	*1*	*0.7 %*	*Lu et al. (2024)*
*AI interaction**	*1*	0.7 %	*Guo et al. (2025*)
*Service provider agent type**	*1*	0.7 %	*Arıkan et al. (2023)*
*Technological evolution in the e-commerce**	*1*	*0.7 %*	*Singh and Vijay (2024)*
(*) These studies are not directly consumer-oriented; however, they have been included in the analysis as they are still relevant to retailers' use of AI.			

The retail sector primarily serves end consumers, and thus, RQ2 investigates studies that focus on consumer-related topics. While consumer approaches within these studies were analyzed through various variables, the primary consumer-oriented intent of each study was identified. Findings indicate that buying behaviour is a predominant focus in the existing literature. A closer examination of Table 1 suggests that buying behaviour is a significant area within the context of AI. The research has analyzed the impact of technologies such as AI algorithms, virtual influencers, voice assistants, and VR on consumers' purchase intentions. For instance, Gallin and Portes (2024) highlighted the role of trust, while Pham et al. (2024) emphasized the importance of anthropomorphism in influencing consumer behavior. These studies often employ theoretical frameworks such as TAM, SOR, SCM, and CASA. These frameworks provide a foundation for understanding consumers' perceptions, satisfaction, and purchase intentions. For example, the SOR framework analyzes consumers' internal cognitive responses, while SCM examines the influence of social stereotypes on consumer behavior. The studies have identified that personalization and trust significantly enhance purchase intentions (Li et al., 2023; Pham et al., 2024). Additionally, characteristics such as the linguistic style of virtual broadcasters (Yao et al., 2024) or their emotional expressions (Dabiran et al., 2024) were found to affect consumers' purchasing decisions. Especially, AI and VR technologies have demonstrated their ability to shape consumer behavior through factors like perceived benefits, trust, and user satisfaction. Notably, only some studies specifically address brand-related topics, suggesting a potentially valuable area for exploration in future research.

4.3 Frequencies of AI Focus (RQ3)

Table 2 presents the AI and AI-based products examined within the studies. The analysis reveals that a wide range of AI products are discussed across the literature. Notably, "Chatbots" emerge as the most frequently utilized AI product in these studies.

Table 2: Frequencies Of AI Focus

AI Focus	Counts	%	Author(s)
Chatbots	20	13.7 %	Zhou and Chang (2024); Xie et al. (2024); Huang et al. (2024); Markovitch et al (2024); Shahzad et al (2024); Kayeser Fatima et al (2024); Lee and Li (2023); Xu et al. (2023); Aslam (2023); Wang et al. (2023); Song et al. (2023); Li and Zhang (2023); Li and Wang (2023); Ruan and Mezei (2022); Huang and Dootson (2022); Fan et al (2022); Song et al. (2022); Tran et al. (2021); Rese at al. (2020); Pantano and Pizzi (2020);
Virtual influencer	14	9.6 %	Zhou et al. (2024); Kim and Park (2024); Yu et al. (2024); Deng et al (2024); Dabiran et al (2024); Yang et al (2024); Shao (2024); Akhtar et al (2024); Jiang et al (2024); Liu and Lee (2024); El Hedhli (2023); Li et al. (2023); Alboqami (2023); Deng and Jiang (2023)

AI general	13	9 %	Singh and Vijay (2024); Chakraborty et al. (2024); Brüns and Meissner (2024); Zhou et al (2024); Wang and Qiu (2024); Pang et al (2024); Kim et al (2024); Bilal et al (2024); Huang and Gursoy (2024); Peng et al. (2023); Hu and Pan (2023); Chinchanachokchai et al. (2021); Prentice and Nguyen (2020)
Service robots	10	6.8 %	Vinoi et al (2025); Shehawy et al. (2025); Kervenoael (2024); Söderlund (2024); Mehmood et al (2024); Zhang and Song (2024); Park et al (2023); Arıkan et al. (2023); Söderlund (2022); Prentice and Nguyen (2021)
Voice assistant	8	5.5%	Kumar et al. (2024); Sestino (2024); Rohit et al. (2024); Oliveira et al. (2023); Kang and Shao (2023); Klaus and Zaichkowsky (2022); Poushneh (2021a); Poushneh (2021b)
Augmented reality (AR)	7	4.8 %	Chakraborty et al. (2024); Aslam and Davis (2024); Caboni et al. (2024); Schultz and Kumar (2024); Recalde et al. (2024); Xu et al (2024); Hsu et al. (2021)
ChatGPT	6	4.1 %	Li et al. (2025); Niu and Mvondo (2024); Park and Ahn (2024); Pham et al (2024); Chang and Park (2024); Kim et al. (2023)
AI algorithms	4	2.7 %	Li et al. (2025); Gallin and Portes (2024); Njoku et al. (2024)
AI-enabled products	3	2.1 %	Wang et al. (2024); Lee and Kim (2024); Zhang and Wang (2023)
AI enabled voice	3	2.1 %	Wang et al. (2024); Poushneh et al. (2024); Patrizi et al. (2024)
Autonomous vehicles	3	2.1 %	Molinillo et al. (2024); Foroughi et al. (2023); Park et al. (2021)
Virtual agent	3	2.1 %	Soderlund et al. (2021); Lunardo et al. (2016); Ben Mimoun et al. (2012)
Virtual streamers	3	2.1 %	Yao et al. (2024); Hu and Ma (2023); Gao et al. (2023)
AI agent	2	1.4 %	Guo et al. (2025); Choi et al. (2024)
Large language models	2	1.4 %	Li et al. (2025); Praveen et al. (2024)
Machine learning	2	1.4 %	Mustak et al. (2024); Lu et al. (2024)
Smart retail technology	2	1.4 %	Adapa et al. (2020); Bassano et al. (2018)
Smart technology, artificial intelligence, robotics, and algorithms (STARA)	2	1.4 %	Zhao et al. (2023); Kang et al. (2023)
Virtual assistant	2	1.4 %	Le et al. (2023); Kamoonpuri and Sengar (2023)
Virtual reality (VR)	2	1.4 %	Zhang et al (2024); Chakraborty et al. (2024)
AI adoption	1	0.7 %	Gupta and Rathore (2024)
AI assistants	1	0.7 %	Yuan et al. (2022)

AI avatar services	1	0.7 %	Park et al. (2024)
AI digital humans	1	0.7 %	Moore et al. (2022)
AI-enabled conversational agents	1	0.7 %	Jan et al. (2023)
AI identity	1	0.7 %	Li et al. (2024)
AI-powered automated retail stores	1	0.7 %	Pillai et al. (2020)
AI-powered digital assistance	1	0.7 %	Rahman et al. (2023)
AI powered tools	1	0.7 %	Prentice et al. (2023)
AI telesellers	1	0.7 %	Li et al. (2023)
Anthropomorphic delivery robots	1	0.7 %	Xu et al. (2024)
Computational intelligence (CI)	1	0.7 %	Behera et al. (2024)
Conversational agents	1	0.7 %	Ben Mimoun and Poncin (2015)
Customer service chatbots	1	0.7 %	Hsu and Lin (2023)
Dall-e	1	0.7 %	Park and Ahn (2024)
Digital assistant	1	0.7 %	Maduku et al. (2023)
Digital human avatar	1	0.7 %	Li et al. (2023)
Digital humans	1	0.7 %	Silva and Bonetti (2021)
Facial recognition payment technology (FRPT)	1	0.7 %	Wang et al. (2024)
Fashion sales robot	1	0.7 %	Song and Kim (2021)
Human-robots	1	0.7 %	Chuah and Yu (2021)
Intelligent customer service agents (ICSAS)	1	0.7 %	Cheng et al. (2024)
Intelligent personal assistant	1	0.7 %	Guo and Luo (2023)
Mobile trading services	1	0.7 %	Yi et al. (2025)

Natural language processing (NLP)	1	0.7 %	Mustak et al. (2024)
Robotics in the catering industry	1	0.7 %	Zheng et al. (2024)
Self-driving delivery robots	1	0.7 %	Koh and Yuen (2024)
Smart mirror	1	0.7 %	Sestino (2024)
Smart shop	1	0.7 %	Chang and Chen (2021)
Smart shopping carts	1	0.7 %	Mohamed Jasim (2024)
Social home robots	1	0.7 %	Gao et al. (2025)
Social robots	1	0.7 %	Subero-Navarro et al. (2022)
Unmanned store	1	0.7 %	Nam et al. (2025)
Virtual reality (VR) tourism	1	0.7 %	Huang (2023)
Virtual reality stores	1	0.7 %	Mkedder et al. (2024)

Research indicates that numerous AI-based products are implemented within the retail sector. RQ3 explores which AI software is most frequently utilized. As shown in Table 2, a range of AI products are in use, with Chatbots emerging as the most studied. Chatbots used to enhance consumer satisfaction have been widely studied (e.g., by Zhou and Chang, 2024; Huang et al., 2024; Xie et al., 2024). These works examine chatbot strategies, including humour, politeness, and recovery mechanisms and their effects on trust and satisfaction. Studies like Lee and Li (2023) and Shahzad et al. (2024) investigated how chatbot affordances and service quality impact brand loyalty, particularly in the luxury and e-commerce sectors. These works underline the role of emotional engagement and consumer-brand interactions mediated by chatbots. By SOR theory, how chatbots influence emotions and behaviours (Shahzad et al., 2024; Fatima et al., 2024). Chatbots are mainly used to enhance consumer satisfaction, adoption, and brand loyalty. Their role in personalized communication, service recovery, and emotional support is a recurring theme. A review of studies on chatbots indicates that consumer satisfaction is a primary focus in this area of research. Theoretically, the SOR model is predominantly employed to analyze consumer responses within these studies. The relatively limited research on other AI products points to notable gaps in the literature. The reasons for the scarcity or absence of studies in these areas may represent an independent avenue for future investigation.

4.4 Theoretical Bases of Studies (RQ4)

Table 3 presents the theories underpinning the studies, highlighting the variety of theoretical frameworks researchers use to explain new technologies. The analysis indicates that the TAM is the most commonly applied theory. Additionally, it was noted that 56 studies did not reference any specific theoretical framework.

Table 3: Frequencies Of Theoretical Bases Of Studies

Theories	Counts	%	Author(s)
Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)	9	5.8 %	Shehawy et al. (2025); Mohamed Jasim (2024); Niu and Mvondo (2024); Park et al (2024); Schultz and Kumar (2024); Recalde et al (2024); Park et al (2021); Rese at al. (2020); Adapa et al (2020)
Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR)	8	5.2 %	Shahzad et al (2024); Pham et al (2024); Xu et al (2024); Gao et al. (2023); Rahman et al (2023); Maduku et al (2023); Fan et al (2022); Hsu et al. (2021)
Theory of Computers As Social Actors (CASA)	6	3.9 %	Cheng et al. (2024); Kervenoael (2024); Yu et al. (2024); Mehmood et al (2024); Guo and Luo (2023); Song et al. (2022);
Mind Perception Theory	4	2.6 %	Xie et al. (2024); Yang et al. (2024); Liu and Lee (2024); Li et al. (2023)
Stereotype Content Model (SCM)	4	2.6 %	Cheng et al. (2024); Yao et al. (2024); El Hedhli et al. (2023); Xu et al. (2023)
Theory of Mind	3	2%	Söderlund (2024); Wang and Qui (2024); Söderlund (2022)
Unified Theory of Acceptance And Use of Technology (UTAUT)	3	2%	Foroughi et al (2023); Huang (2023); Adapa et al (2020)
Anthropomorphism Theory	2	1.3 %	Le et al. (2023); Arıkan et al.
Politeness Theory	2	1.3 %	Zhang and Song (2024); Song et al. (2024)
Social Support Theory	2	1.3 %	Bilal et al. (2024)
Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)	2	1.3 %	Huang (2023); Adapa et al. (2020)
Affordance Actualization Theory	1	0.7 %	Lee and Li (2023)
Affordance Theory	1	0.7 %	Chakraborty et al. (2024)
Attribution Theory	1	0.7 %	Arıkan et al. (2023)
Basic Psychological Needs Theory	1	0.7 %	Wang et al. (2024)
Behavioral Reasoning Theory	1	0.7 %	Koh and Yuen (2024)
Cognitive Appraisal Theory	1	0.7 %	Wang et al. (2023)
Cognitive Appraisal Theory of Stress	1	0.7 %	Zhao et al. (2023)
Cognitive Dissonance Theory	1	0.7 %	Mohamed Jasim (2024)
Cognitive Load Theory	1	0.7 %	Wang et al. (2024)
Cognitive-Affective-Normative (CAN) Model	1	0.7 %	Subero-Navarro et al. (2022)
Communication Accommodation Theory	1	0.7 %	Park et al. (2023)
Complexity Theory	1	0.7 %	Alboqami (2023)
Consumption Value Theory	1	0.7 %	Schultz and Kumar (2024)
Coolness Theory	1	0.7 %	Niu and Mvondo
Cue Consistency Theory	1	0.7 %	Li et al. (2023)
Diffusion of Innovations Theory	1	0.7 %	Kamoonpuri and Sengar (2023)
Dual-Process Theory	1	0.7 %	Yuan et al. (2022)
Emotional Intelligence Theory	1	0.7 %	Le et al. (2023)
Endorsement Theory	1	0.7 %	Li et al. (2023)
Extended Behavioral Reasoning Theory (BRT)	1	0.7 %	Jan et al. (2023)
Flow Theory	1	0.7 %	Poushneh (2021b)
Hedonic Information Systems Acceptance Model	1	0.7 %	Chang and Chen (2021)

Information Sharing Theory	1	0.7 %	Song and Kim (2021)
Innovation Resistance Theory.	1	0.7 %	Koh and Yuen (2024)
Intelligence (AI) Device Use Acceptance	1	0.7 %	Koh and Yuen (2024)
Language Expectancy Theory	1	0.7 %	Hu and Ma (2023)
Means-End Chain Theory	1	0.7 %	Kang and Shao (2023)
Media Affinity Theory	1	0.7 %	Niu and Mvondo (2024)
Multi-Attribute Utility Theory	1	0.7 %	Kumar et al. (2024)
Parasocial Relationship Theory	1	0.7 %	Zhou et al. (2024)
Perception-Action Model (PAM) of Empathy	1	0.7 %	Poushneh et al. (2024)
Persuasion Knowledge Theory	1	0.7 %	Gallin and Portes (2024)
Protection Motivation Theory (PMT)	1	0.7 %	Park et al. (2024)
Push–Pull Mooring Framework	1	0.7 %	Li and Zhang et al. (2023)
Rational Choice Theory	1	0.7 %	Fan et al. (2022)
Reciprocal Determinism Theory	1	0.7 %	Hu and Pan (2023)
Schema Theory	1	0.7 %	Lee and Kim (2024)
Self-Determination Theory	1	0.7 %	Caboni et al. (2024)
Self-Verification Theory	1	0.7 %	Park and Ahn (2024)
Service Quality (Servqual) Theory	1	0.7 %	Yi et al. (2025)
Service Quality Hierarchy	1	0.7 %	Xu et al. (2024)
Social Cognition Theory	1	0.7 %	Poushneh (2021a)
Social Exchange Theory	1	0.7 %	Kayeser Fatima et al. (2024)
Social Influence Theory	1	0.7 %	Akhtar et al. (2024)
Social Practice Theory (SPT)	1	0.7 %	Aslam (2023)
Social Response Theory	1	0.7 %	Oliveira et al. (2023)
Stressor–Emotion Model	1	0.7 %	Zhou et al. (2024)
System Usage Theory	1	0.7 %	Guo et al. (2025)
Task-Technology Fit	1	0.7 %	Xu et al. (2024)
Theory of Consumption Value	1	0.7 %	Mohamed Jasim (2024)
Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)	1	0.7 %	Adapa et al. (2020)
Transactional Theory of Stres	1	0.7 %	Huang and Gursoy (2024)
Uses And Gratifications (UG) Theory	1	0.7 %	Rese et al. (2020)
Value-Attitude-Behavior Theory	1	0.7 %	Kim et al. (2024)
Non	56	36.13 %	

The final research question examines the theoretical foundations utilized in AI studies to identify the predominant theories in this emerging field. Table 3 reveals that researchers have employed a range of theoretical frameworks to explain AI-related topics and derive specific insights. However, the TAM appears as the most frequently applied theory. An examination of studies utilizing the TAM reveals a primary focus on consumer adoption behaviours, particularly on AR applications. Shehawy et al. (2025) examined the adoption of robots in retail services using the TAM to identify user criteria for technology adoption. Their study highlights how perceived usefulness (improvement in service quality) and ease of use (accessibility of robots) influence user intentions. Similarly, Rese et al. (2020) compared TAM with the U&G theory to explore chatbot adoption. Their research evaluated the core components of TAM (ease of use and usefulness) in the context of chatbot adoption. Niu and Mvondo (2024) applied TAM to understand

user loyalty and satisfaction with ChatGPT. They emphasized the impact of perceived reliability and ease of use on user loyalty while introducing a new dimension, such as ethical concerns. Park et al. (2024) provided an approach to assess how chatbots contribute to service satisfaction within the TAM framework. Recalde et al. (2024), in the context of AR, incorporated mediating variables like self-efficacy and customer engagement into TAM. This demonstrated TAM's adaptability to emerging technologies. Park et al. (2021) applied TAM in the context of autonomous vehicles, examining the moderating effects of demographic variables (e.g., age, gender, income) on the relationship between perceived usefulness and intention to use. These studies reveal that TAM can be adapted to various technology types (e.g., chatbots, AR, AV) and is valuable for understanding consumer behavior in different technological contexts. TAM has proven to be an effective tool for analyzing the adoption and usage of emerging technologies like AR. The studies mainly focus on perceived usefulness, ease of use, and user trust. Furthermore, they illustrate TAM's utility in explaining broader impacts, such as user satisfaction, loyalty, and ethical concerns, beyond technology adoption. This table is intended to guide future researchers by highlighting theories that may be well-suited to advancing studies in this area.

5. Conclusion

This study aims to elucidate the current landscape of AI-focused research in the retail sector. A comprehensive literature review examined 137 studies of the SPAR-4_SLR protocol. These studies were analyzed based on publication year, retail-consumer relations, types of artificial intelligence utilized, and underlying theoretical frameworks.

This study evaluates the literature within the context of consumer focus, the AI tools utilized, and the theoretical frameworks applied, aiming to provide a comprehensive status assessment of this area. The findings indicate that consumer behaviour is the most extensively studied domain. At the heart of marketing strategies is the identification of target markets and predicting their behaviour. In this respect, AI tools provide significant advantages to businesses, offering new perspectives for understanding consumer needs, addressing challenges, and seizing opportunities. This trend suggests that future studies will increasingly focus on consumer behaviour and AI.

Another noteworthy finding is that chatbots are the most commonly researched AI tools. Chatbots, particularly in e-commerce, are widely used to enhance customer experiences and improve satisfaction. The studies analyzed reveal that chatbots are predominantly associated with customer satisfaction. Considering the importance of customer satisfaction in fostering repeat purchases, this finding underscores the critical role chatbots play in creating customer value.

The study also highlights the prevalence of the TAM as the most frequently employed theoretical framework. This demonstrates that researchers aim to understand how consumers adopt relatively new AI technologies. This insight provides a solid foundation for future research. Delving deeper into the factors influencing consumers' acceptance of new technologies offers significant implications for academics and businesses. Understanding these factors can guide businesses in refining their marketing strategies and delivering superior customer service.

Enriching the studies in the following areas will contribute to the literature; While most studies emphasize AI's impact on purchasing behaviour, future research may delve deeper into its role in post-purchase experiences, such as customer support or loyalty program engagement, facilitated by AI tools like chatbots. As chatbots were the most used technology in the analyzed studies, research may explore comparative performance evaluations between chatbots and other AI applications like recommendation engines, virtual assistants, or AI-driven personalization platforms. Investigating how AI usage differs across various retail sectors (e.g., fashion, electronics, groceries) may reveal unique trends and tailored strategies for enhancing customer experience. Exploring how cultural differences influence consumer responses to AI in retail environments may enrich the global applicability of the findings and offer localized insights. Future research may further investigate how AI optimizes consumer experiences across platforms, which, in turn, may drive purchasing behaviour and strengthen customer loyalty. Another noteworthy point for future

studies is existing research's limited emphasis on brand management. Brand perception, a critical element in shaping consumer experience, presents a valuable avenue for exploration through artificial intelligence. Investigating how AI can analyze and influence brand perception offers significant potential to advance our understanding of consumer behaviour and engagement, making it a rich area for future research. And last, when considering employees, one of the most critical factors in businesses' competitive edge, it is observed that there are relatively few studies on the impact of AI technologies on employees' work processes. Studies in this area will provide particularly valuable contributions to the retail sector.

Finansman/ Grant Support
Yazar(lar) bu çalışma için finansal destek almadığını beyan etmiştir.
The author(s) declared that this study has received no financial support.
Çıkar Çatışması/ Conflict of Interest
Yazar(lar) çıkar çatışması bildirmemiştir.
The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

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