

Changing Preferences Of Consumers Towards Hybrid Mode Of Shopping In Chidambaram Taluk

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ABSTRACT

Digitalization, increased internet penetration, and shifting lifestyle patterns have all significantly altered consumer purchasing behavior. Retail practices have changed as a result of the rise of hybrid shopping, where customers use both online and offline channels, particularly in semi-urban areas. The purpose of this study is to examine how consumers' preferences for hybrid shopping are evolving in Chidambaram Taluk. A structured questionnaire was used to gather primary data from 200 respondents. Consumer preference and the impact of demographic variables were investigated using two-way ANOVA and mean score analysis based on a five-point Likert scale. The findings show that hybrid shopping is highly preferred, with notable variations across age and income categories.

Keywords: Hybrid Shopping, Consumer Preference, Mean Score Analysis, Two-Way ANOVA, Chidambaram Taluk

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the retail landscape has undergone a significant transformation due to rapid technological advancement, increased internet penetration, and changing lifestyles of consumers. Traditional brick-and-mortar stores, which once dominated the retail sector, are now complemented by online shopping platforms that offer convenience, variety, and competitive pricing. This shift has given rise to a new form of consumer behavior known as hybrid shopping, where consumers make use of both online and offline modes while purchasing goods and services. Hybrid shopping has become especially relevant in semi-urban and urban regions, where consumers seek a balance between personal shopping experience and digital convenience. Understanding the changing preference of consumers towards hybrid shopping is essential for retailers, marketers, and policymakers. It helps businesses design effective marketing strategies, improve customer satisfaction, and enhance competitiveness in the market. From an academic perspective, studying hybrid shopping behavior provides insights into evolving consumer psychology and the impact of technology on purchasing decisions. Therefore, the present study attempts to analyze the changing preference of consumers in the hybrid mode of shopping in Chidambaram Taluk, focusing on the factors influencing their choice and the extent to which demographic variables affect their shopping behavior..

1.2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to earlier research, convenience, trust, price sensitivity, and technological literacy all have an impact on hybrid shopping behavior (Rao & Gupta, 2021). Kumar (2020) discovered that consumers prefer online platforms for routine purchases and offline stores for high-involvement products. However, there is room for the current study because few studies concentrate on semi-urban areas like Chidambaram Taluk.

1.3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To analyze the level of consumer preference towards hybrid mode of shopping in Chidambaram Taluk using mean score analysis.
- To examine the influence of age and income on consumer preference towards hybrid mode of shopping using Two-Way ANOVA.

1.4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The descriptive research design was used for this investigation. Using the simple random sampling method, 200 customers from Chidambaram Taluk were chosen. A well-structured questionnaire was used to gather primary data, and journal articles and periodicals were used to gather secondary data.

1.5 TOOLS USED

- Mean Score Analysis
- Two-Way ANOVA

1.5.1 MEAN SCORE ANALYSIS**TABLE 1.5.1****Mean Score of Consumer Preference towards Hybrid Mode of Shopping**

S. No	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Total	Mean Score	Rank
1	Hybrid shopping saves time and effort	10	18	32	84	56	200	3.79	III
2	Hybrid shopping offers better price comparison	8	14	28	90	60	200	3.90	I
3	I feel comfortable using both online and offline modes	12	20	36	78	54	200	3.71	IV
4	Hybrid shopping provides better product satisfaction	10	22	30	82	56	200	3.76	II
5	Hybrid shopping improves overall shopping experience	14	26	34	74	52	200	3.62	V

The mean scores of all statements range between 3.62 and 3.90, indicating a high level of preference towards hybrid mode of shopping. The highest mean score (3.90) reveals that consumers prefer hybrid shopping mainly due to price comparison benefits. The results confirm that consumers in Chidambaram Taluk actively combine online and offline shopping mode

1.5.2 TWO-WAY ANOVA ANALYSIS**Variables Considered**

- Factor A: Age Group
- Factor B: Monthly Income
- Dependent Variable: Preference score towards hybrid shopping

Hypotheses

H₀₁: Age does not significantly influence consumer preference towards hybrid shopping.

H₀₂: Income does not significantly influence consumer preference towards hybrid shopping.

TABLE 1.5.2**Two-Way ANOVA**

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F Value	Sig.
Age	36.214	3	12.071	5.68	0.000
Income	28.642	2	14.321	6.74	0.000
Age × Income	18.576	6	3.096	1.46	0.192
Error	395.488	188	2.104		
Total	478.920	199			

Level of Significance: 1%

The F value for Age (5.68) is significant ($p < 0.01$), indicating that age has a significant influence on hybrid shopping preference. The F value for Income (6.74) is also significant, showing income plays an important role. The interaction effect (Age × Income) is not significant, meaning age and income independently influence consumer preference. Thus, null hypotheses H₀₁ and H₀₂ are rejected, while H₀₃ is accepted.

1.6. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- ❖ Consumers show a high preference towards hybrid mode of shopping.
- ❖ Price comparison and convenience are the strongest motivating factors.
- ❖ Age and income significantly influence hybrid shopping preference.
- ❖ Interaction between age and income is not statistically significant.
- ❖ Hybrid shopping bridges the gap between traditional and digital retailing.

1.7. SUGGESTIONS

- ❖ Retailers should integrate online price comparison with offline purchase options.
- ❖ Training programs can improve digital awareness among older consumers.
- ❖ Hybrid loyalty programs can enhance customer retention.

1.8. CONCLUSION

The present study on the Changing Preference of Consumers in Hybrid Mode of Shopping in Chidambaram Taluk clearly reveals that consumers are no longer confined to a single mode of purchase. The hybrid model—combining both online and offline shopping has emerged as the most preferred option due to its flexibility, convenience, and enhanced decision-making support. Consumers appreciate the ability to physically inspect products in offline stores while also enjoying the advantages of online platforms such as price comparison, wider variety, discounts, and home delivery. The mean score analysis indicates that factors like convenience, time saving, product availability, and trust significantly influence consumer preference towards hybrid shopping. The results of ANOVA further show that demographic variables such as age, income, and education level have a significant impact on the level of preference for hybrid shopping, highlighting variations in consumer behavior across different groups. By adopting an effective hybrid strategy, businesses can enhance customer satisfaction, build long-term loyalty, and remain competitive in the rapidly evolving retail environment.

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