
GYMS IN RETAIL ENVIRONMENTS: UNDERSTANDING THE INTERACTION BETWEEN MODERN LIFESTYLES, HEALTH, AND DIGITAL CONSUMPTION

Derent Marcelino Tan¹, Vincentius Jacob Gunawan²

¹ Mass Communication Department, Faculty of Digital Communication and Hotel & Tourism, BINUS University, Jakarta, Indonesia

² Computer Science Department, School of Computer Science, BINUS University, Jakarta, Indonesia

E-mail: ¹⁾ derent.tan@binus.ac.id, ²⁾ vincentius.gunawan002@binus.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The urban fitness industry has undergone a significant transformation with the emergence of the retail gym concept—fitness spaces that not only offer exercise facilities but also integrate elements of lifestyle, digital technology, and consumption. This study aims to explore how retail gyms function as hybrid spaces that unite health needs, digital consumption, and social identity formation. Using a qualitative approach with case studies of three retail gyms in Jakarta, data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and digital content analysis. The findings reveal three main themes: gyms as part of lifestyle and social identity, service personalization through digital technology, and platform-based fitness product consumption. These findings affirm that retail gyms are not merely spaces for physical exercise, but also digitally connected arenas for consumption and social interaction. This study contributes to the understanding of hybrid spaces in modern retail contexts and their implications for service design strategies and urban consumer behavior.

Keywords: retail gym, hybrid space, lifestyle, health needs, digital consumption

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the fitness industry has undergone a significant transformation, driven by the rise of healthy lifestyle trends, the digitalization of services, and increasing individual awareness of health and wellness. Gyms, which were once solely spaces for physical exercise, have evolved into environments that blend health, lifestyle, and digital consumption.

This development has been influenced by the emergence of the retail gym concept—gyms that not only offer workout facilities but also sell products, provide digital applications, and build communities based on shared interests and lifestyles. This concept represents a fusion of physical and digital consumption within a single environment, often referred to as a hybrid space (de Souza e Silva, 2006; Judijanto, Rolando, & others, 2024; Rolando, Pramesworo, Apriliani, & Othman, 2024; Tanuwijaya, Mulyono, Purnama, & Rolando, 2024). Amid technological advancements, young consumers now demand more personalized, flexible, and integrated fitness experiences. They engage with gyms not only through physical visits but also via apps, social media, and online coaching services that enable interaction beyond spatial and temporal limitations.

In the urban context, retail gyms have emerged as alternative social spaces that fulfill multiple functions: places for exercise, socializing, shopping, and self-identity construction. This transformation reflects a shift in the role of gyms—from health facilities to integral parts of the retail and digital lifestyle ecosystem (Featherstone, 2010; Zukin, 2020; (Ingriana, Hartanti, Mulyono, & Rolando, 2024; Judijanto & Rolando, 2024; Rolando & Mulyono, 2024a). This study aims to explore how retail gyms function as hybrid spaces in metropolitan areas, and how users interpret and respond to these experiences. The primary focus is on the integration of health needs, digital consumption, and lifestyle within a digitally connected retail environment.

The concept of the retail gym as a hybrid space stems from evolving ideas about alternative social spaces and the role of technology in shaping consumer experiences. Oldenburg (1999) introduced the notion of the third place, referring to social spaces outside of home and work that facilitate informal interaction. In the modern context, gyms can be categorized as third places, where social and personal activities occur simultaneously. De Souza e Silva (2006) developed the idea of hybrid space, a space resulting from the integration of physical and digital environments. This concept serves as a key theoretical framework for understanding how contemporary gyms function not only as physical spaces but also as digital ones, accessed through apps and social media. In these hybrid spaces, consumer experiences are mediated by technology, creating new, simultaneous experiences (Nuraini, Mulyono, Purnama, & Rolando, 2024; Rolando & Mulyono, 2024b; Rolando & Wigayha, 2024; Wijaya, Mulyono, Utami, & Rolando, 2024).

In the domain of lifestyle consumption, Featherstone (2010) explains how the body and self-image become central to modern consumer culture. Gyms serve as spaces where bodies are modified and displayed as representations of identity. Smith & Johnson (2021) reinforce this view by showing that gyms are no longer merely workout spaces but symbols of status and components of lifestyle branding strategies. Digitalization also plays a crucial role in the transformation of gyms. Lee et al. (2022) explored how virtual coaching and fitness applications foster new forms of consumer engagement. Meanwhile, Horemuž et al. (2021) highlighted the importance of hybrid experiences in enhancing the convenience and flexibility of fitness services. Gyms now operate within the context of digital wellness, where interaction is no longer limited by physical space or time (Rahardja, Rolando, Chondro, & Laurensia, 2024; Rolando, 2024).

Pantano and Gandini (2022) describe the concept of omnichannel retailing, a strategy that integrates physical and digital channels to create a holistic consumption experience. This is particularly relevant to retail gyms, where services are offered both in-person and through digital platforms. Rigby (2011) also emphasizes the need to transform the shopping experience by combining multiple channels to more effectively reach consumers. Zukin (2020) views retail as part of urban semiotics, where retail spaces like gyms function as symbolic and cultural arenas within the city. As lifestyle retail spaces, gyms visually and socially express modern urban values such as health, achievement, and connectivity (Karaniya Wigayha, Rolando, & Wijaya, 2024; Mulyono, Ingriana, & Hartanti, 2024; Rolando & Ingriana, 2024).

2. RESEARCH METHOD

Preliminary studies on social spaces indicate that places such as cafés, urban parks, and gyms can serve as third places—alternative spaces outside the home and workplace for social interaction (Oldenburg, 1999). Gyms, particularly in their modern retail form, have evolved into meeting points

for lifestyle expression and consumption (Ingriana, Gianina Prajitno, & Rolando, 2024; Maha, Derian Hartono, Prajitno, & Hartanti, 2024; Mulyono, Hartanti, & Rolando, 2024).

Research by Smith & Johnson (2021) highlights that gyms are no longer perceived merely as fitness facilities, but as components of a lifestyle strategy encompassing diet, wellness, and self-image. Gyms also function as sites of symbolic consumption, where membership and participation reflect social status and specific cultural values. Another study by Lee et al. (2022) shows that digitalization has transformed the gym experience. The presence of fitness tracking apps, virtual coaching, and digital community platforms has strengthened the link between technology and physical experience in gyms, creating a hybrid ecosystem (Ingriana, Chondro, & Rolando, 2024).

According to Horemuž et al. (2021), digital wellness services not only enhance convenience but also expand the spatial and temporal reach of fitness services. This means that gyms are no longer confined to physical locations but extend into digital spaces that remain continuously active. Although various studies have addressed aspects of fitness, technology, and lifestyle separately, there is still limited research that specifically analyzes gyms as hybrid spaces—spaces that simultaneously integrate physical, digital, and symbolic consumption into a unified experience

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study strategy to understand the phenomenon of retail gyms as hybrid spaces. This approach was chosen because it allows for in-depth exploration of users' meanings, perceptions, and experiences. Three retail gyms in Jakarta were selected as study sites based on the following criteria: (a) active digital services (apps and social media), (b) the sale of fitness products on-site, and (c) an active user community. The selection was made using purposive sampling.

Data were collected through three main methods: participant observation of in-gym activities and digital interactions, semi-structured interviews with 15 active gym users, and content analysis of the gyms' official apps and social media accounts. The interviews focused on exploring user experiences related to digital services, perceptions of the physical space, and reasons for choosing a particular gym. Observations were used to capture the social and consumption dynamics occurring within the gym environment.

As a methodological foundation, Braun and Clarke (2006) propose thematic analysis as a qualitative method suitable for exploring meaning within consumer experiences. This technique is used in this study to identify themes from interviews, observations, and digital content.

Table 1 Inclusion and Exclusion

| Category | Criteria | Inclusion | Exclusion |
|-------------|--|---|--|
| Retail Gym | Hybrid combining services, elements, digital technology integration. | Space Retail gyms that integrate health, and consumption app. | Traditional gyms without retail or digital features. |
| Consumption | Focus on lifestyle and health needs part consumption. | Studies addressing consumption of fitness services and health-related products. | Studies focusing on sports performance or medical health care. |
| Digital | Involvement of digital technologies | Research that examines | Research lacking digital emphasis on digital |

in fitness integration in fitness aspects in fitness
experiences and retail setting. retail.
retail activities.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

The first emerging theme is the gym as a lifestyle. Users perceive the gym not merely as a place for physical exercise, but as an extension of their social identity. They actively share their gym activities on social media and view membership as a symbol of personal achievement.

The second theme concerns health needs and service personalization. Most respondents appreciated digital features such as virtual coaching, progress tracking, and algorithm-based workout recommendations. These technologies enhance motivation and foster a sense of personal engagement in the fitness process.

The third theme involves digital consumption and merchandise. In addition to fitness services, gyms also offer products such as supplements, sportswear, and accessories, which can be purchased through apps. Consumers actively participate in digital promotions and frequently receive special offers via social media. Gyms also serve as community interaction spaces, where users build new social networks, participate in group challenges, and attend community events. This reinforces the gym's role as a third place that extends the consumption experience.

Overall, the findings indicate that retail gyms operate as hybrid spaces—integrating physical activity, social interaction, and digital consumption in a cohesive manner. These elements complement and reinforce one another, creating a lifestyle retail ecosystem that is adaptive to the digital era.

3.2 Discussion

The findings of this study reinforce the argument that retail gyms can no longer be categorised solely as fitness facilities. They are hybrid entities that integrate both physical and digital consumption, while also playing a significant role in the construction of social identity. The results align with de Souza e Silva's (2006) theory of hybrid spaces, where physical and digital environments interact simultaneously to create new, inseparable experiences. In this context, the gym becomes a concrete example of such a space within modern consumer culture.

The integration of digital services within gyms illustrates the application of the omnichannel retail concept—a strategy that combines various channels (both physical and digital) to deliver a comprehensive consumer experience (Rigby, 2011; Pantano & Gandini, 2022). Technology's role in mediating the relationship between users and fitness services opens new opportunities for product innovation and marketing. Gym operators can leverage user data to offer personalized services and build loyal digital communities (Putri & Arma, 2025; Wigayha, Rolando, & Wijaya, 2025).

This study offers practical implications for the fitness and retail industries: the need for flexible space design, community-driven digital marketing strategies, and the development of service ecosystems that are responsive to the increasingly connected lifestyles of urban consumers (Jasuli, Suwandi, & Harun, 2025; Rolando, Widjaja, & Chandra, 2025).

4. CONCLUSION

This study set out to explore how retail gyms function as hybrid spaces, seamlessly blending health needs, digital consumption, and social identity formation within the urban fitness industry. Through a qualitative case study approach involving three retail gyms in Jakarta, our findings

underscore that these establishments are far more than mere venues for physical exercise. We identified three core themes: gyms as integral to lifestyle and social identity, the role of digital technology in service personalization, and the prevalence of platform-based fitness product consumption.

The evidence strongly supports the notion that retail gyms exemplify de Souza e Silva's (2006) concept of hybrid spaces, where the physical and digital realms converge to create an interconnected and dynamic consumer experience. This integration aligns with the principles of omnichannel retailing, allowing for a holistic engagement that extends beyond the gym's physical boundaries. The pervasive use of digital services not only enhances personalized fitness journeys but also facilitates the consumption of related products, transforming the gym into a comprehensive lifestyle retail ecosystem.

Practically, these findings highlight the necessity for fitness and retail industries to adopt flexible space designs, implement community-focused digital marketing strategies, and cultivate service ecosystems that cater to the evolving, interconnected lifestyles of urban consumers. By understanding retail gyms as multifaceted hybrid spaces, businesses can better innovate their offerings and strengthen consumer engagement in the digital age.

REFERENCES

- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- De Souza e Silva, A. (2006). From cyber to hybrid: Mobile technologies as interfaces of hybrid spaces. *Space and Culture*, 9(3), 261–278. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1206331206289022>
- Featherstone, M. (2010). Body, image and affect in consumer culture. *Body & Society*, 16(1), 193–221. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1357034X09354357>
- Horemuž, M., Sjödin, A., & Sundström, M. (2021). Wellness in the digital age: The role of hybrid experiences in gyms. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 61, 102540. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2021.102540>
- Ingriana, A., Chondro, J., & Rolando, B. (2024). *TRANSFORMASI DIGITAL MODEL BISNIS KREATIF: PERAN SENTRAL E-COMMERCE DAN INOVASI TEKNOLOGI DI INDONESIA* (Vol. 1). Retrieved from <https://journal.dinamikapublika.id/index.php/JUMDER>
- Ingriana, A., Gianina Prajitno, G., & Rolando, B. (2024). *THE UTILIZATION OF AI AND BIG DATA TECHNOLOGY FOR OPTIMIZING DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGIES* (Vol. 1). Retrieved from <https://journal.dinamikapublika.id/index.php/IJEBS>
- Ingriana, A., Hartanti, R., Mulyono, H., & Rolando, B. (2024). Pemberdayaan E-Commerce: Mengidentifikasi Faktor Kunci Dalam Motivasi Pembelian Online. *Jurnal Manajemen Dan Kewirausahaan (JUMAWA)*, 1(3), 101–110.
- Jasuli, D., Suwandi, A., & Harun, M. (2025). *ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON ROAD PAVEMENT PERFORMANCE AND RESILIENCE: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW OF ADAPTATION STRATEGIES* (Vol. 1). Retrieved from <https://journal.dinamikapublika.id/index.php/mosaic>
- Judijanto, L., & Rolando, B. (2024). EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT. *International Journal Of Financial Economics (IJEFE)*, 1(3), 747–754.
- Judijanto, L., Rolando, B., & others. (2024). APPROACHES TO PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN MODERN ORGANISATIONS. *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF FINANCIAL ECONOMICS*, 1(3), 755–764.

ARTICLE TITLE

Author

- Karaniya Wigayha, C., Rolando, B., & Wijaya, A. J. (2024). *PELUANG BISNIS DALAM INDUSTRI HIJAU DAN ENERGI TERBARUKAN* (Vol. 1). Retrieved from <https://journal.dinamikapublika.id/index.php/Jumder>
- Lee, H., Kim, S., & Lee, J. (2022). Digital transformation of the fitness industry: A study on consumer engagement in virtual coaching services. *Technology in Society*, 70, 102013. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techsoc.2022.102013>
- Maha, V. A., Derian Hartono, S., Prajitno, G. G., & Hartanti, R. (2024). *E-COMMERCE LOKAL VS GLOBAL: ANALISIS MODEL BISNIS DAN PREFERENSI KONSUMEN* (Vol. 1). Retrieved from <https://journal.dinamikapublika.id/index.php/Jumder>
- Mulyono, H., Hartanti, R., & Rolando, B. (2024). *SUARA KONSUMEN DI ERA DIGITAL: BAGAIMANA REVIEW ONLINE MEMBENTUK PERILAKU KONSUMEN DIGITAL* (Vol. 1). Retrieved from <https://journal.dinamikapublika.id/index.php/JUMDER>
- Mulyono, H., Ingriana, A., & Hartanti, R. (2024). *PERSUASIVE COMMUNICATION IN CONTEMPORARY MARKETING: EFFECTIVE APPROACHES AND BUSINESS RESULTS* (Vol. 1). Retrieved from <https://journal.dinamikapublika.id/index.php/IJEBS>
- Nuraini, I., Mulyono, H., Purnama, B., & Rolando, B. (2024). Pengaruh Lingkungan Kerja, Disiplin Kerja, dan Motivasi Kerja Terhadap Kinerja Karyawan Jasa Travel. *Journal of Trends Economics and Accounting Research*, 4(4), 968–975.
- Oldenburg, R. (1999). *The great good place: Cafes, coffee shops, bookstores, bars, hair salons and other hangouts at the heart of a community*. Marlowe & Company.
- Pantano, E., & Gandini, A. (2022). Omnichannel retailing as a driver of hybrid consumption: A consumer behavior perspective. *Journal of Business Research*, 142, 450–460. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.12.038>
- Putri, L. W. B., & Arma, O. (2025). *VISUAL BRANDING'S IMPACT ON CONSUMER PURCHASING IN THE DIGITAL ERA: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW* (Vol. 1). Retrieved from <https://journal.dinamikapublika.id/index.php/mosaic>
- Rahardja, B. V., Rolando, B., Chondro, J., & Laurensia, M. (2024). *MENDORONG PERTUMBUHAN E-COMMERCE: PENGARUH PEMASARAN MEDIA SOSIAL TERHADAP KINERJA PENJUALAN* (Vol. 1). Retrieved from <https://journal.dinamikapublika.id/index.php/JUMDER>
- Rigby, D. (2011, Desember). The future of shopping. *Harvard Business Review*.
- Rolando, B. (2024). *CULTURAL ADAPTATION AND AUTOMATED SYSTEMS IN E-COMMERCE COPYWRITING: OPTIMIZING CONVERSION RATES IN THE INDONESIAN MARKET* (Vol. 1). Retrieved from <https://journal.dinamikapublika.id/index.php/IJEBS>
- Rolando, B., & Ingriana, A. (2024). *SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS MODELS IN THE GREEN ENERGY SECTOR: CREATING GREEN JOBS THROUGH RENEWABLE ENERGY TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION* (Vol. 1). Retrieved from <https://journal.dinamikapublika.id/index.php/IJEBS>
- Rolando, B., & Mulyono, H. (2024a). UNLOCKING THE POWER OF DATA: EFFECTIVE DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING STRATEGIES TO ENGAGE MILLENNIAL CONSUMERS. *TRANSEKONOMIKA: AKUNTANSI, BISNIS DAN KEUANGAN*, 4(3), 303–321.
- Rolando, B., & Mulyono, H. (2024b). UNLOCKING THE POWER OF DATA: EFFECTIVE DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING STRATEGIES TO ENGAGE MILLENNIAL CONSUMERS. *TRANSEKONOMIKA: AKUNTANSI, BISNIS DAN KEUANGAN*, 4(3), 303–321.
- Rolando, B., & Wigayha, C. K. (2024). Pengaruh E-Wom Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Online: Studi Kasus Pada Pelanggan Aplikasi Kopi Kenangan. *Jurnal Manajemen Dan Kewirausahaan (JUMAWA)*, 1(4), 193–210.

- Rolando, B., Pramesworo, I. S., Apriliani, R., & Othman, M. K. B. H. (2024). THE APPLICATION OF FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING STANDARDS TO THE QUALITY OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS IN MANUFACTURING COMPANIES IN INDONESIA. *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ECONOMIC LITERATURE*, 2(10), 2999–3010.
- Rolando, B., Widjaja, A. F., & Chandra, C. K. (2025). *UNDERSTANDING FASHION PURCHASING DECISIONS: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IN RETAIL* (Vol. 1). Retrieved from <https://journal.dinamikapublika.id/index.php/mosaic>
- Smith, J., & Johnson, T. (2021). Fitness as lifestyle branding: A qualitative study on identity and social meaning of gym culture. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 21(4), 892–910. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1469540519856620>
- Tanuwijaya, M., Mulyono, H., Purnama, B., & Rolando, B. (2024). Pengaruh Kompensasi, Motivasi dan Disiplin Kerja Terhadap Kepuasan Kerja Karyawan. *Journal of Trends Economics and Accounting Research*, 4(4), 956–967.
- Wigayha, C. K., Rolando, B., & Wijaya, A. J. (2025). *MOTION GRAPHICS FOR E-COMMERCE: AN ANALYSIS OF ITS IMPACT ON SALES CONVERSION* (Vol. 1). Retrieved from <https://journal.dinamikapublika.id/index.php/mosaic>
- Wijaya, F., Mulyono, H., Utami, F. N., & Rolando, B. (2024). Pengaruh Kualitas Pelayanan, Harga, dan Kepuasan Pelanggan Terhadap Loyalitas Pelanggan Motor. *Journal of Trends Economics and Accounting Research*, 4(4), 976–984.
- Zukin, S. (2020). Retail and the city: The urban semiotics of consumption. *City & Community*, 19(1), 5–11. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cico.12468>