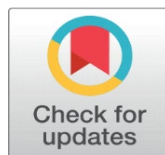
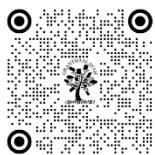


A STUDY ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONSUMER'S BEHAVIOUR AND MARKETING MIX OF AYURVEDIC PRODUCTS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THIRUVANANTHAPURAM CITY

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ABSTRACT

The growing global recognition of Ayurveda has led to an increasing demand for Ayurvedic products, making consumer behavior a key determinant of their market success. This study investigates the relationship between consumer behavior and the marketing mix of Ayurvedic products in Thiruvananthapuram city, with a sample size of 110 respondents selected through a structured questionnaire survey. The analysis focuses on how the four P's of marketing Product, Price, Place, and Promotion influence consumer purchasing decisions. The findings reveal that product quality, safety, and authenticity strongly influence consumer preferences, as individuals associate Ayurvedic products with natural healing and long-term wellness. Price emerged as a significant factor, as consumers seek affordable products without compromising on quality. The study also highlights the importance of distribution channels, where accessibility through Ayurvedic stores, pharmacies, and online platforms significantly shapes buying behavior. In terms of promotion, word-of-mouth recommendations, endorsements by Ayurvedic practitioners, and informative advertising campaigns were found to be more effective than conventional promotional methods in building trust and enhancing brand loyalty. Overall, the results confirm a strong positive relationship between the marketing mix elements and consumer behavior towards Ayurvedic products. The study concludes that marketers and manufacturers should prioritize product authenticity, maintain competitive pricing strategies, strengthen distribution networks, and implement consumer-focused promotional strategies to align with consumer expectations and increase market share. These insights offer practical implications for enhancing the growth and sustainability of the Ayurvedic product sector in Thiruvananthapuram.

Keywords: Consumer Behavior, Marketing Mix, Ayurvedic Products, Thiruvananthapuram, 4P's

1. INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda, a holistic system of medicine that originated in India more than 3,000 years ago, has regained importance in the modern health and wellness industry. Unlike allopathic medicine, which focuses primarily on the treatment of specific diseases, Ayurveda emphasizes prevention, balance, and natural healing through herbs, minerals, and lifestyle practices. In the contemporary world, where lifestyle-related diseases such as diabetes, obesity, and stress-related disorders are on the rise, consumers are increasingly seeking safer and sustainable alternatives to synthetic medicines. This shift has contributed to the steady growth of the Ayurvedic products market in India and abroad.

India has emerged as the largest market for Ayurvedic and herbal products, with Kerala standing out as a hub of Ayurvedic practices. Kerala's cultural identity is strongly intertwined with Ayurveda, and its reputation as a wellness tourism destination has contributed to the global recognition of Ayurvedic therapies and products. Thiruvananthapuram, the capital city of Kerala, plays a central role in this scenario. The city is home to reputed Ayurvedic hospitals, traditional treatment centers, and retail outlets that cater to both domestic consumers and international visitors. Thus, Thiruvananthapuram provides an ideal setting to study consumer behavior towards Ayurvedic products and the strategies businesses adopt to market them.

Consumer behavior refers to the study of how individuals, groups, or organizations select, purchase, use, and dispose of goods and services to satisfy their needs and wants. In the case of Ayurvedic products, consumer behavior is shaped by multiple factors such as cultural background, health consciousness, trust in traditional medicine, perception of product quality, and influence of marketing practices. Unlike conventional products, Ayurvedic items are deeply connected to consumer beliefs about health, nature, and spirituality, which makes their purchasing decisions more complex and value-driven.

In marketing, the "4Ps" Product, Price, Place, and Promotion form the basis of the marketing mix, a strategic tool that organizations use to position their offerings in the market. Each element of the marketing mix plays a crucial role in influencing consumer decisions. For Ayurvedic products, Product quality and authenticity are critical, as consumers expect natural ingredients, traditional formulations, and certifications that guarantee safety. Price is equally important, since while consumers are willing to pay a premium for authenticity, they also expect affordability and value for money. Place or distribution channels determine the accessibility of these products, whether through pharmacies, specialized Ayurvedic stores, supermarkets, or online platforms. Finally, Promotion helps create awareness and trust; in the case of Ayurveda, promotional strategies such as endorsements by practitioners, testimonials, word-of-mouth, and informative campaigns are more effective than aggressive advertising.

The significance of studying consumer behavior in relation to the marketing mix of Ayurvedic products becomes even more relevant in Thiruvananthapuram. As the city attracts both local consumers and international tourists, businesses must balance traditional authenticity with modern marketing strategies. With the rapid growth of e-commerce and digital marketing, Ayurvedic firms are exploring new ways to reach consumers, yet challenges remain in terms of misinformation, counterfeit products, and lack of consumer awareness about certification standards. Thus, understanding the exact relationship between consumer perceptions and the marketing strategies employed by firms can help strengthen consumer trust and improve brand loyalty.

Moreover, the Ayurvedic industry in India has been supported by several initiatives under the Ministry of AYUSH, which has aimed to standardize products, ensure safety, and expand markets globally. Despite this, competition from modern pharmaceuticals and skepticism among a section of consumers highlight the need for well-researched marketing practices. By analyzing how the marketing mix influences consumer behavior, businesses can develop effective strategies to increase acceptance of Ayurvedic products not only in Thiruvananthapuram but also in broader markets.

Therefore, this study attempts to bridge the gap between consumer expectations and business practices by exploring the relationship between consumer behavior and the marketing mix of Ayurvedic products in Thiruvananthapuram city. By focusing on a sample of 110 respondents, the study aims to identify which elements of the marketing mix have the most significant impact on consumer decisions. The results are expected to provide valuable insights for marketers, policymakers, and manufacturers in designing consumer-centric strategies that ensure both commercial success and the sustainable promotion of Ayurveda as a trusted system of health and wellness.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite the growing popularity of Ayurvedic products due to increasing health awareness and preference for natural remedies, businesses continue to face challenges in effectively influencing consumer behavior. Many consumers remain uncertain about the authenticity, safety, and efficacy of these products, while variations in pricing create doubts regarding quality. Distribution channels are not uniformly accessible, and promotional strategies often rely on traditional methods rather than modern, innovative approaches. In Thiruvananthapuram, a city renowned for its Ayurvedic heritage, these gaps are particularly evident, as consumer expectations do not always align with the marketing practices adopted by firms. Therefore, a systematic study of the relationship between consumer behavior and the

marketing mix Product, Price, Place, and Promotion is essential to provide insights that can help Ayurvedic businesses strengthen their strategies and meet consumer needs more effectively.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- **IJIP (2024)** reported a study on consumer awareness and attitudes toward Ayurvedic products in India. The findings revealed that knowledge, perceived naturalness, and safety were the major factors shaping positive consumer attitudes. Consumers preferred products that were authentic, trustworthy, and aligned with traditional values of Ayurveda. The study emphasized that product authenticity and quality assurance are crucial to gain consumer confidence. It also highlighted the role of consumer education and awareness campaigns in strengthening favorable perceptions and encouraging adoption of Ayurvedic products.
- **Dores et al. (2023)** conducted a systematic review published in MDPI that explored consumer knowledge, beliefs, and perceptions about herbal medicines and dietary supplements. The study revealed that many consumers lacked accurate information and often relied on personal beliefs or unverified sources when making purchase decisions. Concerns about safety and possible side effects also acted as barriers to adoption. The authors emphasized that these gaps could be addressed through evidence-based communication and transparent promotional strategies. Their findings underline the importance of educational promotion in strengthening consumer trust and encouraging responsible usage of Ayurvedic and herbal products.
- **Suhail et al. (2020)** examined the quality of Ayurveda healthcare services and its influence on customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions. The study found that consumers' perceptions of service quality and trust were the strongest predictors of their willingness to revisit and recommend Ayurvedic services. This highlights the importance of ensuring authenticity, safety, and reliability in Ayurvedic offerings. The findings suggest that effective promotion strategies should focus on building trust and credibility, as these factors play a vital role in shaping positive consumer behavior.

3.1. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1) To study the relationship among buying behaviour and marketing mix.
- 2) To analyze the impact of pricing strategies on consumer purchase decisions of Ayurvedic products.
- 3) To study the role of distribution channels (place) in shaping consumer accessibility and buying preferences.
- 4) To study the level of consumers satisfaction among selected brands of Ayurvedic products.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study on "Relationship between Consumer Behavior and Marketing Mix of Ayurvedic Products with Special Reference to Thiruvananthapuram City" follows a descriptive research design. Both primary and secondary data were used. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire given to consumers in Thiruvananthapuram city. Secondary data were collected from books, journals, websites, and reports related to Ayurveda and marketing.

The study used convenience sampling to select respondents. A total of 110 respondents were surveyed. The collected data were tabulated and analyzed using simple statistical tools like correlation, Chi square and rank to understand the relationship between the marketing mix (Product, Price, Place, Promotion) and consumer behavior. The results were interpreted to find how marketing strategies influence consumer buying decisions.

5. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

To study the relationship among buying behaviour and marketing mix.

The objective of the study is to find the relationship between buying behaviour and the marketing mix of Ayurvedic products. The correlation table shows that all four factors of the marketing mix are positively related to buying behaviour.

Correlations					
Variable	Buying Behaviour	Product	Price	Place	Promotion
Buying Behaviour	1	.642**	.518**	.476**	.581**
Product	.642**	1	.494**	.452**	.567**
Price	.518**	.494**	1	.401**	.433**
Place	.476**	.452**	.401**	1	.389**
Promotion	.581**	.567**	.433**	.389**	1
N = 110					
Note: **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					

Source Primary Data

The correlation results show a positive and significant relationship between buying behavior and all four elements of the marketing mix. Among these, Product ($r = 0.642$, $p < 0.01$) has the strongest influence, indicating that authenticity, quality, and safety of Ayurvedic products play the most important role in shaping consumer behavior. Promotion ($r = 0.581$, $p < 0.01$) is the next strongest factor, suggesting that awareness, endorsements, and word-of-mouth significantly impact purchase decisions. Price ($r = 0.518$, $p < 0.01$) also has a meaningful role, reflecting consumer sensitivity towards affordability and value for money. Place ($r = 0.476$, $p < 0.01$) has a moderate relationship, showing that accessibility and availability influence, but not as strongly as product quality or promotion.

Overall, the findings confirm that all dimensions of the marketing mix are positively related to consumer buying behavior, with Product and Promotion being the most critical determinants in the Ayurvedic market of Thiruvananthapuram.

To analyze the impact of pricing strategies on consumer purchase decisions of Ayurvedic products.

Pricing is one of the most important elements of the marketing mix as it directly affects consumer purchase decisions. In the case of Ayurvedic products, consumers often compare price with quality, authenticity, and value for money. Analyzing the impact of pricing strategies helps to understand how affordability and perceived fairness influence buying behaviour and overall acceptance of Ayurvedic products.

TABLE 2

Correlations		
Variable	Price	Purchase Decision
Price	1	.518**
Purchase Decision	.518**	1
N = 110		
Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

Source Primary Data

The correlation result shows a positive and significant relationship ($r = .518$, $p < 0.01$) between pricing strategies and consumer purchase decisions. This indicates that consumers are influenced by the way Ayurvedic products are priced. Reasonable and affordable pricing encourages purchase decisions, while very high prices may restrict buying. The strength of the relationship suggests that while price is not the only factor, it plays an important role in shaping consumer behaviour. Companies should therefore adopt pricing strategies that balance affordability with perceived quality to attract and retain customers.

To study the role of distribution channels (place) in shaping consumer accessibility and buying preferences.

Distribution channels play a vital role in making Ayurvedic products accessible to consumers and directly influence their buying preferences. The availability of products in pharmacies, supermarkets, Ayurvedic outlets, and online platforms ensures convenience and trust, which shapes how customers decide where to purchase. A well-planned distribution strategy not only increases accessibility but also strengthens consumer confidence and loyalty.

TABLE 3

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	18.462	4	0.001**
Likelihood Ratio	17.23	4	0.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	10.154	1	0.001**
N of Valid Cases	110		

Source Primary Data

* Significant at 1 percent level

The Chi-Square test result shows that the association between distribution channels (place) and consumer buying preferences is statistically significant (Pearson $\chi^2 = 18.462$, $df = 4$, $p = 0.001$). Since the p-value is less than 0.05, it indicates that the type of distribution channel such as Ayurvedic shops, pharmacies, supermarkets, or online platforms has a strong influence on how consumers access and purchase Ayurvedic products. This highlights that accessibility through multiple convenient and trusted channels shapes consumer buying behavior.

To study the level of consumers satisfaction among selected brands of Ayurvedic products.

Consumer satisfaction shows how happy people are with Ayurvedic product brands. It depends on factors like quality, price, availability, and effectiveness of the products. If consumers are satisfied, they are more likely to buy again and recommend the brand to others. Studying the level of satisfaction helps to understand which brands meet consumer needs better.

TABLE 4

Factors	Mean Score	Rank
Price Affordability	69.8	III
Promotion/Advertisement	57.6	VI
Product Quality	78.4	I
Packaging & Labeling	61.4	V
Effectiveness/Results	74.2	II
Availability/Accessibility	65.7	IV

Source Primary Data

The Garrett Ranking Analysis shows that Product Quality (Rank I) and Effectiveness (Rank II) are the most influential factors for consumer satisfaction, while Price (Rank III) and Availability (Rank IV) moderately affect satisfaction. Packaging (Rank V) and Promotion (Rank VI) have relatively lesser importance, highlighting that consumers give more priority to quality and results than to promotional activities or presentation.

6. FINDINGS

- Product quality, authenticity, and safety are the most important factors influencing consumer behavior.
- Promotion through ads, awareness, and recommendations strongly affects purchase decisions.
- Price impacts buying, as consumers prefer affordable and value-for-money products.
- Place has a smaller effect, but accessibility and availability still influence purchases.

- Price has a significant effect on consumer purchase decisions.
- Affordable and reasonable pricing encourages buying.
- Very high prices reduce purchase decisions.
- Price is important, though not the only factor influencing behavior.
- Companies should keep prices fair while ensuring quality.
- Distribution channels significantly affect consumer buying preferences.
- The type of outlet (Ayurvedic shops, pharmacies, supermarkets, online) influences purchasing decisions.
- Accessibility and convenience play an important role in shaping consumer behavior.
- Consumers prefer trusted and easily available channels for buying Ayurvedic products.
- Product Quality is the most important factor for consumer satisfaction. Packaging and Promotion are less important compared to quality and effectiveness.

7. SUGGESTIONS

- Maintain authenticity, safety, and effectiveness of Ayurvedic products to build trust.
- Regular quality checks and certification can enhance consumer confidence.
- Use advertisements, awareness campaigns, and word-of-mouth endorsements to influence buying decisions.
- Collaborate with healthcare professionals and wellness influencer's to promote products.
- Keep products reasonably priced to attract more consumers.
- Offer value-for-money packages, discounts, or loyalty benefits to retain customers.
- Ensure wide availability of products across Ayurvedic stores, pharmacies, supermarkets, and online platforms.
- Focus on accessibility and convenience to reach more consumers.
- Improve packaging to increase appeal, even though it is less important than quality.
- Provide educational information on product labels about benefits and usage.
- Highlight certifications, traditional authenticity, and clinical effectiveness.
- Engage customers through wellness programs, free samples, or workshops.

8. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that consumer behavior towards Ayurvedic products in Thiruvananthapuram is strongly influenced by the four elements of the marketing mix Product, Price, Place, and Promotion. Among these, product quality, authenticity, and safety stand out as the most decisive factors driving consumer trust and satisfaction. Affordable pricing, without compromising quality, significantly encourages purchase decisions, while higher prices restrict consumer willingness to buy. Distribution channels also play a vital role, as accessibility through Ayurvedic shops, pharmacies, supermarkets, and online platforms shapes consumer preferences and purchase patterns. Promotional strategies such as word-of-mouth, practitioner endorsements, and informative advertisements are more effective in building confidence than conventional marketing methods. Overall, the study highlights that marketers and manufacturers should prioritize product authenticity, adopt fair pricing policies, strengthen distribution networks, and design consumer-oriented promotional campaigns to meet consumer expectations. These measures are essential not only for enhancing consumer satisfaction and loyalty but also for ensuring the sustainable growth of the Ayurvedic product sector.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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