

A study on customer awareness and satisfaction of selected ayurvedic & herbal products

¹ Chandiraleka E, ² Dr. Hamsalakshmi R

¹ Research Scholar, Dept. of Commerce, LRG Government Arts College for Women, Palladam Road, Tirupur, Tamil Nadu, India

² Assistant Professor, Dept. of Commerce, LRG Government Arts College for Women, Palladam Road, Tirupur, Tamil Nadu, India

Abstract

Ayurveda or Ayurvedic medicine is the traditional holistic medical system in India. Natural scientists and Ancient seers developed this system based on centuries of experiments, studies, and meditations. Word Ayurveda is formed by "ayus" meaning life and "Veda" meaning knowledge. Ayurveda is about knowing more about life. It tells about happy and sad life, good and bad life and what is good for healthy and happy life. History of Ayurveda can be traced way back to the evolution of the civilization. Herbal is "a collection of descriptions of plants put together for medicinal purposes." An herbal may also classify the plants it describes, may give recipes for herbal extracts, tinctures, or potions, and sometimes include mineral and animal medicaments in addition to those obtained from plants. However, it is the educated middle class that turns to health foods, botanicals and herbal remedies all over the world today. Because Ayurvedic herbs, practices and recommendations, including yoga and/or meditation, have also been shown to be helpful as a home remedy for acne, relieving chronic constipation or IBS, fighting chronic fatigue syndrome, reducing pain and lowering obesity risk. It states that 'traditional herbal products benefited from an increasingly educated consumer base, which uses herbal remedies to complement other medicines or vitamins and dietary supplements to prevent health conditions and to improve their general health. From this point of view the research paper analysis selected Patanjali Ayurvedic and herbal products. The objective of the research work is to study about the customer awareness, factor influencing the customers to use the selected products, and the buying preferences towards selected Ayurvedic and herbal products. Tools used for the analysis are simple percentage analysis and Garrett's Ranking Technique and it is concluded that all the customers are aware of the product, and most of the customers are satisfied with the quality & price of the product.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Herbal, customer awareness, buying preferences, Purchase decision

1. Introduction

Ayurveda is the oldest surviving complete medical system in the world. Derived from its ancient Sanskrit roots - 'ayus' (life) and 'ved' (knowledge) – and offering a rich, comprehensive outlook to a healthy life, its origins go back nearly 5000 years. To when it was expounded and practiced by the same spiritual rishis, who laid the foundations of the Vedcivilisation in India, by organising the fundamentals of life into proper systems.

The main source of knowledge in this field therefore remains the Vedas, the divine books of knowledge they propounded, and more specifically the fourth of the series, namely Atharvaveda that dates back to around 1000 BC. Of the few other treatises on Ayurveda that have survived from around the same time, the most famous are Charaka Samhita and the Sushruta Samhita which concentrate on internal medicine and surgery respectively. The Astanga Hridayam is a more concise compilation of earlier texts that was created about a thousand years ago. These between them forming a greater part of the knowledge base on Ayurveda as it is practiced today.

The art of Ayurveda had spread around in the 6th century BC to Tibet, China, Mongolia, Korea and Sri Lanka, carried over by the Buddhist monks travelling to those lands. Although not much of it survives in original form, its effects can be seen in the various new age concepts that have originated from there.

No philosophy has had greater influence on Ayurveda than

Sankhya's philosophy of creation and manifestation. Which professes that behind all creation there is a state of pure existence or awareness, which is beyond time and space, has no beginning or end, and no qualities. Within pure existence, there arises a desire to experience itself, which results in disequilibrium and causes the manifestation of the primordial physical energy. And the two unite to make the "dance of creation" come alive.

Imponderable, indescribable and extremely subtle, this primordial energy – which and all that flows from its existing only in pure existence – is the creative force of all action, a source of form that has qualities. Matter and energy are so closely related that when energy takes form, we tend to think of it in terms of matter only. And much modified, it ultimately leads to the manifestation of our familiar mental and physical worlds.

It also gives rise to cosmic consciousness, which is the universal order that prevades all life. Individual intelligence, as distinct from the everyday intellectual mind, is derived from and is part of this consciousness. It is the inner wisdom, the part of individuality that remains unswayed by the demands of daily life, or by Ahamkara, the sense of 'I-ness'.

A Sanskrit word with no exact translation, Ahamkara, is a concept not quite understood by everyone as it is often misleadingly equated to 'ego'. All creations therefore have Ahamkara, not just human beings.

There arises from Ahamkara a two-fold creation. The first is Satwa, the subjective world, which is able to perceive and

manipulate matter. It comprises the subtle body (the mind), the capacity of the five sense organs to hear, feel, see, taste and smell, and for the five organs of action to speak, grasp, move, procreate and excrete. The mind and the subtle organs providing the bridge between the body, the Ahamkara and the inner wisdom, which three together is considered the essential nature of humans.

The second is Tamas, the objective world of the five elements of sound, touch, vision, taste and smell – the five subtle elements that give rise to the dense elements of ether or space, air, fire, water and the earth – from which all matter of the physical world is derived. And it is Rajas, the force or the energy of movement, which brings together parts of these two worlds.

Dense Element	Subtle Element	Sense Organ	Motor Organ	Function
Space	Sound	Ears	Vocal Chords	Speaking
Air	Touch	Skin	Hands	Grasping
Fire	Sight	Eyes	Feet	Moving
Water	Taste	Tongue	Genitals	Procreating
Earth	Smell	Nose	Anus	Excreting

It is worth noting that even at the stage of the dense elements the philosophy of creation –which according to Sankaya is now and in the present, without any past and any future – is still dealing with aspects of existence beyond our simple physical realms. The point of contention being that we are the first and foremost spirit experiencing existence. To use Ayurveda in daily life, one has neither to accept nor even understand this philosophy. But it does provide a deeper insight into how Ayurveda works towards betterment of your health.

Ayurveda therefore is not simply a health care system but a form of lifestyle adopted to maintain perfect balance and harmony within the human existence, from the most abstract transcendental values to the most concrete physiological expressions. Based on the premise that life represents an intelligent co-ordination of the Atma (Soul), Mana (Mind), Indriya (Senses) and Sharira (Body).

That revolves around the five dense elements that go into the making of the constitution of each individual, called Prakriti. Which in turn is determined by the vital balance of the three physical energies - Vata, Pitta, Kapha and the three mental energies - Satwa, Rajas, and Tamas?



The Hindu God of creation revealed the science of Ayurveda to the sage Atreya Ayurveda thus offers a unique blend of science and philosophy that balances the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual components necessary for holistic health.

2. Statement of the problem

Customers are the masters of their money and they have an enormous influence on the economic market change because they possess the ability to implement and coordinate their choice of spending or saving in the purchase decision. Customers are influenced by their attitude towards the product and therefore marketers need to implement their strategies and tactics frequently in order to achieve more customers. Satisfaction and accurate target in finding out what customers are aware and their buying preferences and there by offering products according to this needs will help the industry stake holders to enrich their customer experience and accelerate growth of the market.

The process that turns marketing plans into marketing actions In order to fulfill strategic marketing objectives it is called marketing plan but most of the markets are still challenged by their marketing. Hence this research aims to explore the customer’s awareness and buying preferences towards selected Patanjali Ayurvedic & herbal products

3. Objectives of the study

1. To study about the customer awareness of selected Ayurvedic and herbal products.
2. To study about the factor influencing the customers to use the selected Ayurvedic and herbal products.
3. To study about the buying preferences towards selected Ayurvedic and herbal products.

4. Methodology

The current study is based on primary data and required data were collected from websites, convenient sampling was used in the study. Sample of one hundred respondents were selected for the study and the study undertook a two months period in around Coimbatore city only. Simple percentage analysis and Garrett’s Ranking Technique were used to analyse the data and the pilot survey was conducted.

5. Theoretical Review

5.1 Patanjali Ayurved Limited



Patanjali Ayurved Limited is the leading Ayurvedic Company in India, which was incorporated in the year 2006. Patanjali Ayurved Limited manufactures a wide range of Ayurvedic products that include home care, grocery, personal care, health care, medicine, nutritional products, etc.

The company has grown swiftly to become a leading Ayurvedic company and will invest Rs 1,000 Crore for expansion. The company has a manufacturing unit in Uttarakhand, which produces high quality Ayurvedic products.

Chyawanprash, Honey, Jam, Soan Papdi, Badam Pak and Mustard Oil are some of the products of the company. Products made by the company are of premier quality and optimally priced.

5.2 Patanjali Ayurvedic and Herbal Products

Patanjali Ayurved Limited is an Indian FMCG company. Located in the industrial area of Haridwar, the company

manufactures mineral and herbal products. It has also manufacturing units in Nepal under the trademark Nepal Gramudhyog and imports majority of herbs in India from Himalayas of Nepal. According to CLSA and HSBC, Patanjali is the fastest growing FMCG Company in India. It is valued at 3,000 Crore (US\$450 million) and some predict revenues of 5,000 Crore (US\$740 million) for the fiscal 2015–16.

Patanjali operates via 3 business segments, viz., foods (foods, supplements, digestives, dairy, juices, etc), FMCG (cosmetics (shampoo, soaps, face wash), home care (detergent cakes, powder, liquid), etc) and Ayurvedic products (healthcare products for blood pressure, skin diseases, joint pain, etc). In FY15, of the total sales of INR20.3bn, food and cosmetics contributed INR8bn each, while healthcare products comprised the balance. The company has adequate capacity to achieve its revenue target of INR50-60bn in FY16.

Patanjali Ayurved has limited advertising expenses, which gives it enough leeway to pass on the savings from lower ad spends by way of lower prices. The company advertises in a limited way – news tickers, regional newspapers, some digital advertising, etc., though going ahead it might start other forms of advertising too. Patanjali has adopted the unique information based advertising. For instance, the company highlights the positives of cow's ghee, which automatically helps sale of *Patanjali Ghee*. In the recent past, the company's print advertising has seen a marked increase.

Many people complain that due to Patanjali's weak distribution network its products are not easily available everywhere and they are unable to buy them. To address this concern, the company has chalked out an aggressive plan to improve its presence on the online platform.

Currently, it is already selling its products through its web-site, www.patanjaliayurved.net, from where customers can order the products and get free delivery of the same if the order value exceeds INR499. Other companies likebigbasket.com, etc., that also sell Patanjali products online have been barred from doing so. The company is also implementing ERP for better mapping of inventory (SAP has already been implemented). Patanjali will also be launching its mobile app, which will allow customers to locate nearby outlets that are selling Patanjali products and also facilitate online ordering of products.

5.3 Patanjali impact: online sales of Ayurvedic products on the rise

Awareness about Ayurvedic products driven by increasing popularity of Patanjali Rising popularity of Ayurvedic FMCG brand Patanjali is driving sales of Ayurvedic products online. Several players, from Flip kart to Grofers, are expanding the "Ayurveda and herbal" products category and ramping up product selection, besides expecting three-fold growth in sales from this category.

Most of the players and market experts feel that the rising popularity of Patanjali is helping create awareness among consumers about the benefits of Ayurvedic and herbal products.

Competitors

Albinder Dhindsa, co-founder of hyper local firm Grofers, said, "As awareness about herbal and Ayurvedic products is increasing, the need for brands like Patanjali is also jumping.

Patanjali has been listed on Grofers since August, and for us, one out of every eight carts includes at least one Patanjali product."

This has also led to firms like Emami, Himalaya, Biotique and Dabur planning to ramp up their online presence to compete with Patanjali. For Snap deal, there has been a 90 per cent increase in sales of Ayurvedic products from 2014 to 2015.

"This trend has been noticed in all categories related to health and fitness, such as nutrition, supplements, and fitness equipment. These trends indicate an increasing consciousness of healthy lifestyle among customers, especially those in metros. We have also partnered with Dabur for their Ayurvedic products on the exclusive Live VEDA store," said a Snap deal spokesperson.

Patanjali Ayurved, which has yoga guru Baba Ramdev as brand ambassador, has seen its turnover double to Rs.3,266.97 Crore in the first 10 months of 2015-16, as against the full year turnover of Rs.1,587 Crore in FY 15.

Patanjali's growth has also led to the overall growth of the Ayurveda as a category, said Nitin Kochhar, Vice-President (Categories) at marketplace Shop clues.

"We expect a three-fold growth in sales of Ayurvedic product over the next six months. Though the category is slightly on the premium side, we are witnessing heavy demand for such products, in both personal care and food. We introduced this category early this year after getting queries from our consumers for Patanjali products," Kochhar said, adding that this category is bound to grow through online channel due to huge distribution gaps.

Economic Feasibility

According to Kochhar, the reason why online is a better channel for distribution of this category is that for a local retailer or kirana store, it is not economically feasible to stock the entire product line or selection of products, as the category is still small.

Ayurveda is about 5-10 per cent of the entire food and personal care category, estimated at Rs.1, 50,000 Crore.

5.4 Patanjali Ayurved Business growth driven by increasing demand for herbal products, brand image and new product pipeline

Patanjali, which started as a small pharmacy specializing in Ayurvedic medicines, expanded to sell the full range of consumer categories, from edible oils, biscuits and noodles to toothpaste, hair, skin care products and groceries. According to Ramdev, the company is expected to cross Colgate this year, in terms of revenue and will overtake HUL within the next three to four years. Ramdev also claims that the company does not require glamorous advertising and marketing of its products as the product has the ability to sell itself unlike other FMCG companies.

Patanjali has around 30 products in its pipeline including a health drink, energy bar, cow milk powder, digestive biscuits, and anti-ageing cream and moisturizing cream. In addition to this, they will also look to aggressively market their products through their e-commerce website, which has not been adopted by major FMCG giants. Colgate-Palmolive India has reported its worst sales growth in the last 44 quarters. Hindustan Unilever has also seen its revenue expand at a weak pace since the last six years. This trend is likely to

continue in the future and estimates indicate that by 2020, FMCG giants can lose 3%-8% of their market share to Patanjali. In the toothpaste market, Colgate still remains the market leader but its market share has declined over the last two years. Ramdev led Patanjali has tied up with Future group to increase the penetration of its products and this venture result in intense competition between the two companies.

While Patanjali forays its way into the FMCG segment, other FMCG companies have not remained silent during the process. HUL has restructured its herbal brand "Ayush" by launching it online. In addition to this, an array of products ranging from hair-care, skin-care and pain balms have been launched on their e-commerce platform under Lever Ayush Therapy. Emami has acquired hair oil brand Kesh King last year in order to boost its presence in the herbal market. Godrej has launched a neem-based mosquito coil, hair color with coconut oil and various natural soaps. Colgate has also responded back to Patanjali's entry with its aggressive marketing of the company's active salt neem toothpaste. Himalaya has launched its new range of wellness products which aim to provide the end consumers with therapeutic solutions.

This indicates that both herbal and no-herbal companies are moving back to the start to figure out ways in which natural ingredients can be incorporated into their already existing products and new products.

"According to Research Analyst at Ken Research- "In addition to this, Patanjali must invest resources in order to improve its distribution network and effectively penetrate the rural and urban market by coming out with new product lines and using innovative packaging and design. Other FMCG giants must take notice of the growing trend towards the demand for herbal products and must establish its presence in the herbal segment. The FMCG market is a low-margin business with companies paying high costs for the procurement of raw materials.

Hence, FMCG companies should cultivate their own raw materials or source them directly from farmers, thereby abolishing the intermediaries in the procurement process. In addition to this, FMCG giants can also adopt back to back product launch in the herbal segment to capture the growing potential of this market."

The report titled "Company Profile of Patanjali Ayurved Limited - New Product Pipeline and Brand Image to Fuel Market Growth" provides a comprehensive analysis regarding the performance of the company and its FMCG's in India and will help readers to identify the ongoing trends in the industry and anticipated growth in future depending upon changing industry dynamics in coming years. This report will help industry consultants, FMCG manufacturers, dealers, retail chains, potential entrants into the FMCG segment and other stakeholders to align their market centric strategies according to the ongoing and expected trends in the future.

5.5 Features of Ayurveda

Ayurveda is a science that considers the patient as a whole and provides the unequalled methods of making him/ her perfectly healthy. Apart from nature, survival of humans will become impossible within a few decades from now. Here we have listed out the common features of Ayurveda.

- It is an herbal and natural health care system

- Ayurvedic products are completely safe
- Mind, body and spirit health care system for long creative life
- Treats the whole person and subtly eliminates the cause of the disease
- It gives emphasis in preventive medicine
- It is the most effective natural treatment to detoxify the body
- Highly perfected rejuvenation treatments
- Herbal cure for the diseases
- Preventive as well as curative treatments
- According to Ayurveda, person is a microcosm (small universe) that is part of macrocosm and rhythm or life is closely connected with the rhythms of the universe
- Diseases are caused due to improper eating and life style ignoring one's especial body type, age, and environment
- By establishing a perfect balance between inner and outer world mind, body, and spirit will be in perfect health
- Human body has the enormous power to heal itself

Ayurveda is a 5,000-year-old system of natural healing that's truly stood the test of time. First originating in the Vedic culture of India, it's actually considered by many to be the oldest healing science there is – which is amazing considering the fact that Ayurveda is still practiced effectively today.

Although people living in India have relied on traditional Ayurveda practices to heal everything from infertility to digestive issues for centuries, luckily in recent years — as complementary and alternative health practices have become more and more popular across the world — Ayurveda has been enjoying a major worldwide resurgence.

The primary goal of Ayurvedic medicine is to help people live long, healthy and balanced lives without the need for prescription drugs, complicated surgeries or suffering through painful conditions. In fact, the very word Ayurveda itself means something in Sanskrit similar to “lifespan build on knowledge” or “science of life.”

According to a 2015 report published by University of Maryland Medical Center, Ayurvedic medicine can help treat inflammatory, hormonal, and digestive and auto immune conditions, including:

- Alzheimer's disease
- Anxiety or depression
- Asthma
- Cancer
- Dementia
- Dysmenorrheal (painful menstruation)
- Herpes
- High blood pressure or cholesterol
- Parkinson's disease
- Perimenopausal problems
- Premenstrual syndrome (PMS) and cramps

Ayurvedic herbs, practices and recommendations, including yoga and/or meditation, have also been shown to be helpful as a home remedy for acne, relieving chronic constipation or IBS, fighting chronic fatigue syndrome, reducing pain and lowering obesity risk.

However, it is the educated middle class that turns to health foods, botanicals and herbal remedies all over the world today. The report on Herbal/Traditional Products in the United Kingdom published by Euro monitor International in

July 2013 confirms that in 2012, the sale of traditional herbal products in the UK increased by a healthy 3% to reach £485 million. It states that ‘traditional herbal products benefited from an increasingly educated consumer base, which uses herbal remedies to complement other medicines or vitamins and dietary supplements to prevent health conditions and to improve their general health.’

6. Analysis and Interpretations

This section deals with analysis of customer awareness and buying preferences during the study period.

Following table explains about the Demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. Customer awareness and level of satisfaction of Patanjali Ayurvedic and herbal products. To examine the data simple percentage analysis and Garrett’s Ranking Technique were applied.

Demographic and Socio- Economic Characteristics of the Respondents

Demographic profile		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	49	49
	Female	51	51
	Total	100	100
Age	Below 20 Years	12	12
	21-30 Years	23	23
	31-40 Years	33	33
	41-50 Years	11	11
	51-60 Years	15	15
	Above 60 Years	6	6
	Total	100	100
Marital Status	Married	67	67
	Unmarried	33	33
	Total	100	100
Types of Family	Joint Family	53	54
	Nuclear Family	46	46
	Total	99	100
Educational Status	School Level	37	37
	Degree / Diploma	44	44
	Professional Degree	15	15
	Others	4	4
	Total	100	100
Occupational Status	Business	15	18
	Employed	37	45
	Housewife	18	22
	Professional	8	10
	Agriculture	3	4
	Other	1	1
	Total	82	100
Income Level	Below Rs.10000	17	18
	Rs.10001-20000	57	58
	Rs.20001-30000	20	20
	Rs.30001-40000	3	3
	Above Rs.40000	1	1
	Total	98	100
No. of earning members in the Family	Only one	31	31
	Two members	54	54
	Three members	11	11
	Above three members	4	4
	Total	100	100
II. Source of awareness of the product	Advertisement	31	30
	Magazine	4	4
	Newspaper	12	12
	Internet	16	16
	Family members	22	21
	Own interest	18	17
	Through this questionnaire	0	0
	Total	103	100
III. Level of satisfaction towards selected factors	Hygiene	52	49
	Nutrition value	42	39
	Immune system	1	1
	Digestive system	8	8
	Nerve system	0	0

	Others	3	3
	Total	106	100
Frequency of buying	Daily	1	1
	Day by Day	3	3
	Weekly	28	27
	Fornight	29	28
	Monthly	19	18
	At the time of window shopping	15	14
	Depends upon the budget	9	9
	Any other	0	0
	Total	104	100
Purchase decision	Male – Head of the family	27	27
	Female – Head of the family	32	32
	Children	12	12
	Jointly	17	17
	Base on occasion	2	2
	Any other	1	1
	Total	100	100
Pricing level	Suit for me	95	95
	Need modification	5	5
	Total	100	100

Total numbers of 100 respondents involved in this pilot survey, regarding demographic characteristics of the respondents, 51% were females the remaining 49% were males. Regarding the age group, 33% of the respondents were in the age group of 31-40 years. Based on the findings, the respondents are mostly married persons with 67%, 53% of the respondents in the sample are joint family, Regarding size of the family, 52% of the respondents were in the group of below 4 members, and 44% of the respondents are mostly Degree /Diploma holders, Regarding the income level, 57% of the respondents were in the category of Rs.10001-20000, Finally, the no. of the earning members in the family of the respondents were mostly in the category of 2 members. The study shows that, 31% of the respondents are come to

know about the products through advertisement, and 52% of the respondents feel that the health factor / benefit are hygiene, and 28% of the respondents buy the products at fortnight, Regarding the purchase decision, 32% of the respondents were in the category of female- head of the family, 95% of the respondents are said suitable pricing policy of all their products are followed for their products.

Garrett’s Ranking Technique

Garrett’s Ranking Technique - Major influencing factor. This technique has been used to find the majority of the customer by order of their preference and presented in the following table.

S. No	Particulars	Garret Score	Percentage	Rank
1	Pesticides / chemical free	6924	0.182	1
2	No adulteration	6567	0.173	2
3	Eco-friendly	5898	0.155	3
4	More nutritious	5316	0.139	4
5	Competitive price	4320	0.113	5
6	Traditional based	4051	0.106	6
7	Health factors	3814	0.100	7
8	Any other	1158	0.030	8
	Total	38048		

By applying Garrett’s Ranking method it is found that, the factors ‘Pesticides / Chemical free’ and ‘No adulteration’ are the major factors that influence the reasons for prefer Patanjali organic food products.

The least factor that influences the reasons for organic food products is ‘Any other’. Therefore 0.182% respondents have considered Pesticides / Chemical free as the most important factor leading to reasons for prefers Patanjali organic food products.

7. Findings

From the analysis it is found that most of the customers are aware of the product through advertisement, customers are satisfied with the quality & price of the product. All the

selected respondents were selected the product due to chemical free.

8. Conclusion

Ayurvedic and Herbal remedies are available in all Patanjali and organic stores. Ayurvedic products are reasonably cost effective and well accepted by customers. They are easily available and do not have side effects. With its rich bio-diversity and rich heritage of Indian medicinal system, India would draw world attention as an abode of eco-friendly medicinal systems that are in harmony with the nature, It is concluded that all the customers are aware of the product, and the customers are satisfied with the quality and price of the products.

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