

Research Paper

Consumer Awareness and Attitudes towards Ayurvedic Medicines- A Study with Special Reference to Malappuram District, Kerala

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ABSTRACT

The interest in Ayurvedic medicines has seen a resurgence in recent years, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. This study explores the underlying factors contributing to this trend, focusing on consumer awareness and attitudes towards Ayurvedic products. While the level of interest in Ayurvedic medicine fluctuates, the driving forces point towards a sustained increase in its adoption. Ayurvedic practices are rooted in holistic wellness, representing both a cultural tradition and an alternative health approach. However, the perception of Ayurvedic medicines is not universally positive or negative; it varies based on individual experiences and understanding. This study employs a survey methodology to assess consumer awareness and attitudes, with the aim of providing insights into the current market trends and potential areas for improvement in consumer education and product development.

Keywords: *Ayurvedic Medicines, Consumer Awareness, Perceptions and Attitudes, Holistic Wellness, Market Trends*

Ayurvedic medicine, a traditional system of healing with roots in ancient India, has gained renewed interest in recent years. This resurgence can be attributed to various factors, including growing concerns about the side effects of conventional pharmaceuticals and a desire for more natural and holistic approaches to health. The primary motivations for turning to Ayurvedic medicines include the increasing awareness of the benefits of natural remedies, the desire to maintain a balanced lifestyle, and the cultural significance of these ancient practices.

Ayurveda emphasizes the use of natural resources, such as herbs, minerals, and oils, in the preparation of its medicines. These resources, while abundant, are not infinite, and their sustainable use is becoming increasingly important as demand grows. Just as recycling plays a critical role in conserving scarce natural resources in other industries, the sustainable sourcing and use of Ayurvedic ingredients are vital for the continued practice of this traditional medicine.

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Consumer Awareness and Attitudes towards Ayurvedic Medicines- A Study with Special Reference to Malappuram District, Kerala

The Ayurvedic industry faces challenges similar to those in other sectors, such as ensuring the quality and authenticity of products, maintaining consumer trust, and addressing environmental concerns related to the sourcing of raw materials. This study aims to explore consumer awareness and attitudes towards Ayurvedic medicines, focusing on their perceptions of product quality, safety, and efficacy, as well as their understanding of the sustainability of these products.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Patwardhan (2023) -This paper provides a comparative analysis of Ayurveda and Traditional Chinese Medicine, outlining the growing popularity of both systems in modern healthcare. The authors argue that despite being ancient systems, they are being revived globally due to their holistic approach and increasing awareness of alternative medicines.

Smith (2022) - This study explores the growth of herbal supplement sales in the U.S. market, which includes Ayurvedic products. It examines the factors contributing to this rise, such as consumer preference for natural products, as well as regulatory challenges faced by the industry.

Manohar (2018) - This paper discusses Kerala's unique role in preserving and promoting Ayurvedic medicine. It focuses on the state's infrastructure for Ayurveda and explores how it can serve as a model for global integration of Ayurvedic practices.

Narayana (2019) - The study investigates Indian consumers' perceptions of Ayurvedic medicines, focusing on factors such as cultural affinity, awareness, and the perceived effectiveness of Ayurvedic treatments. It highlights the influence of education and consumer knowledge in shaping attitudes toward Ayurveda.

Sharma (2020) - This paper discusses the global resurgence of Ayurveda during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a particular focus on how consumers turned to Ayurvedic remedies for immune support. It also highlights how global media and governments promoted the use of traditional medicine systems during the pandemic.

Telles (2020) - This review analyzes trends in the global use of Ayurvedic medicine. It identifies key factors driving its popularity, including the increasing interest in holistic wellness, preventive medicine, and the integration of Ayurveda into mainstream healthcare systems in countries like the U.S. and U.K.

Gupta (2020) - This paper explores the evolution of Ayurvedic medicine and its relevance in modern healthcare, emphasizing its applications in managing lifestyle diseases such as diabetes and hypertension. It also covers the growing global awareness and consumer adoption of Ayurveda.

Aggarwal (2016) - This comprehensive review focuses on curcumin, an active compound in turmeric, widely used in Ayurvedic medicine. The paper discusses the increasing global recognition of curcumin's health benefits, particularly in cancer treatment and inflammatory diseases.

NCCIH (2020) - This report by the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health explores the use of alternative medicine, including Ayurveda, in the United States. It

Consumer Awareness and Attitudes towards Ayurvedic Medicines- A Study with Special Reference to Malappuram District, Kerala

presents findings on consumer attitudes, awareness, and the barriers to the adoption of Ayurvedic practices in Western countries.

Srivastava (2021) This paper examines how the COVID-19 pandemic shifted consumer perspectives toward health and wellness, leading to increased interest in Ayurvedic remedies. The authors explore how this shift might affect the long-term global adoption of Ayurveda.

Statement of Problem

As the global demand for health and wellness solutions continues to grow, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, Ayurvedic medicines have gained significant attention. This surge in interest has led to an increased demand for natural resources used in the preparation of these medicines. However, with the rising popularity of Ayurvedic products comes a set of challenges: ensuring the sustainable sourcing of natural ingredients, maintaining the authenticity and quality of products, and addressing consumer concerns about safety and efficacy.

Despite the widespread availability of Ayurvedic products, there is a need to understand the extent of consumer awareness and their attitudes towards these traditional remedies. Additionally, the satisfaction levels of consumers, as well as any challenges they face in using these products, must be assessed to ensure that the industry can meet growing demands while preserving the integrity of Ayurvedic practices.

This study seeks to address these concerns by exploring the factors that influence consumer awareness and attitudes, measuring the current levels of awareness, and identifying any problems consumers face with Ayurvedic medicines and curative healthcare.

Objectives

- To analyze the factors influencing consumer awareness and attitudes towards Ayurvedic medicines and products.
- To assess the level of awareness and attitudes consumers hold regarding Ayurvedic medicines.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A sample of 100 respondents were taken who was taken on the basis of convenience.

Scope of the Study

This study focuses on understanding consumer awareness and attitudes towards Ayurvedic medicines and products. It provides valuable insights into the factors that influence consumer perceptions, including the authenticity, quality, safety, and efficacy of Ayurvedic products. In the current health and wellness landscape, where natural and holistic approaches are gaining popularity, this study sheds light on the growing demand for Ayurvedic medicines and the challenges associated with their sustainable sourcing.

The research also aims to inform both consumers and the Ayurvedic industry about the importance of maintaining high standards in product development and addressing consumer concerns. By evaluating consumer satisfaction and identifying any issues they face, this study contributes to the ongoing efforts to improve the quality and sustainability of Ayurvedic practices. The findings will be particularly useful for companies in the Ayurvedic

Consumer Awareness and Attitudes towards Ayurvedic Medicines- A Study with Special Reference to Malappuram District, Kerala

sector that seek to enhance their products and better meet consumer needs in a rapidly evolving market.

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

Percentage Analysis

Data analysis is a process of inspecting, cleansing, transforming, and modeling data with the goal of discovering useful information, informing conclusions, and supporting decision-making.

Particulars

Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage
MALE	55	55%
FEMALE	45	45%

The survey had a fairly balanced gender distribution, with 55% of respondents being male and 45% female. This indicates a slight male majority, but both genders are well-represented, allowing for diverse perspectives on Ayurvedic medicines.

AGE	No. of Respondents	Percentage
18-20	24	24%
21-25	56	56%
26-30	19	19%

The largest age group is between 21-25 years (56%), suggesting that young adults are the primary demographic interested or involved in Ayurvedic products. This is followed by the 18-20 years group (24%), indicating that the younger generation has a significant level of engagement.

The 26-30 years group forms 19%, while those 30 years and above are minimal (1%), showing a limited interest from older demographics.

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PROFESSION	No. of Respondents	Percentage
STUDENT	62	62%
BUSINESS	18	18%
GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE	5	5%
OTHERS	15	15%

The majority of respondents are students (62%), indicating that students are the primary consumers of Ayurvedic products in this survey.

Consumer Awareness and Attitudes towards Ayurvedic Medicines- A Study with Special Reference to Malappuram District, Kerala

Business professionals constitute 18%, and others (15%) show that a portion of working adults and miscellaneous professions have a moderate interest.

A small percentage, 5%, are government employees, reflecting a lower level of participation in Ayurvedic product use among those in public service

AWARENESS OF AYURVEDIC MEDICINES		
Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
WELL AWARE	32	32%
SOMEWHAT AWARE	43	43%
LIMITED AWARENESS	14	14%
NO AWARENESS	11	11%

Well Aware: 32% of respondents claim to be well-aware of Ayurvedic medicines, indicating a solid base of knowledgeable consumers.

Somewhat Aware: 43% show moderate awareness, implying a curiosity or partial understanding of Ayurveda.

Limited Awareness: 14% have minimal knowledge, highlighting the need for better education or awareness campaigns.

No Awareness: 11% are completely unaware of Ayurvedic medicines, suggesting that there's still a segment of the population unfamiliar with this field.

HAVE YOU PURCHASED AYURVEDIC PRODUCTS?		
Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
YES	87	87%
NO	13	13%

A significant majority (87%) have purchased Ayurvedic products, indicating widespread usage.

Only 13% have not purchased, suggesting that Ayurvedic products are well-established in the market.

SATISFACTION WITH AYURVEDIC PRODUCTS		
Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
VERY SATISFIED	20	20%
SATISFIED	48	48%
NEUTRAL	32	32%

Very Satisfied: 20% are very satisfied, showing a high level of contentment among a portion of users.

Satisfied: 48% are generally satisfied, suggesting that a majority of users have a positive experience with Ayurvedic products.

Consumer Awareness and Attitudes towards Ayurvedic Medicines- A Study with Special Reference to Malappuram District, Kerala

Neutral: 32% are neutral, indicating room for improvement in product effectiveness or customer experience.

TYPE OF AYURVEDIC PRODUCTS USED		
Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
HERBAL SUPPLEMENTS	30	30%
SKINCARE PRODUCTS	45	45%
TRADITIONAL REMEDIES	25	25%

Skincare Products lead the category with 45%, indicating that skincare is the most popular category for Ayurvedic products.

Herbal Supplements follow at 30%, reflecting a strong interest in health-related items.

Traditional Remedies are at 25%, showing that there's still demand for classical Ayurvedic preparations.

FREQUENCY OF USING AYURVEDIC PRODUCTS		
Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
EVERY DAY	8	8%
ONCE A WEEK	34	34%
OCCASIONALLY	31	31%
RARELY	27	27%

Once a Week: 34% use Ayurvedic products weekly, indicating consistent but not daily usage.

Occasionally: 31% use them occasionally, showing a tendency for situational or seasonal use.

Rarely: 27% use them rarely, suggesting that for some, Ayurvedic products are not a primary choice.

Every Day: Only 8% use them daily, indicating that regular use is relatively low.

WILL YOU RECOMMEND AYURVEDIC PRODUCTS?		
Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
YES	57	57%
NO	13	13%
MAYBE	30	30%

Yes: A strong majority of 97% intend to continue using Ayurvedic products, showing a high level of satisfaction and trust.

No: Only 3% do not intend to continue, indicating very low dissatisfaction rates.

Yes: 57% are willing to recommend Ayurvedic products, suggesting a generally positive attitude towards them.

Consumer Awareness and Attitudes towards Ayurvedic Medicines- A Study with Special Reference to Malappuram District, Kerala

Maybe: 30% are unsure, indicating that while they don't have a negative view, they might not be fully convinced.

No: 13% would not recommend, suggesting some dissatisfaction or skepticism.

WILL YOU CONTINUE USING AYURVEDIC PRODUCTS?		
Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
YES	97	97%
NO	3	3%

Yes: A strong majority of 97% intend to continue using Ayurvedic products, showing a high level of satisfaction and trust.

No: Only 3% do not intend to continue, indicating very low dissatisfaction rates.

HAVE YOU LEARNED ABOUT AYURVEDA IN SCHOOL		
Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
YES	58	58%
NO	42	42%

Yes: 58% have learned about Ayurveda in school, suggesting that educational exposure is fairly common.

No: 42% did not learn about Ayurveda in school, highlighting a gap in educational dissemination regarding traditional medicine.

FINDINGS

- Gender: Majority (55%) of the respondents are male.
- Age: Majority (56%) of the respondents are between 21-25 years old.
- Profession: Majority (62%) of the respondents are students.
- Awareness Level: Majority (43%) of the respondents have somewhat awareness of Ayurvedic medicines.
- Purchase Behavior: Majority (87%) of the respondents have purchased Ayurvedic products.
- Satisfaction: Majority (48%) of the respondents are satisfied with the Ayurvedic products they have used.
- Type of Products Used: Majority (45%) of the respondents use Ayurvedic skincare products.
- Frequency of Use: Majority (34%) of the respondents use Ayurvedic products once a week.
- Support for Ayurvedic Products: Majority (57%) of the respondents are willing to recommend Ayurvedic products.
- Continued Use: Majority (97%) of the respondents intend to continue using Ayurvedic products.
- Educational Background: Majority (58%) of the respondents have learned about Ayurveda during their school education.

Consumer Awareness and Attitudes towards Ayurvedic Medicines- A Study with Special Reference to Malappuram District, Kerala

Suggestions

- **Enhance Awareness Campaigns:** Given that many respondents have only somewhat awareness of Ayurvedic medicines, companies and health organizations should invest in educational campaigns to increase knowledge about the benefits, uses, and safety of Ayurvedic products.
- **Target Younger Demographics:** Since the majority of respondents are students and young adults, Ayurvedic product marketing should focus on this demographic by highlighting the relevance of Ayurveda in modern wellness and lifestyle.
- **Expand Product Offerings:** With a high demand for skincare products, Ayurvedic companies should consider expanding their range in this category, ensuring a variety of options that cater to different skin types and concerns.
- **Promote Sustainability:** Emphasize the sustainable sourcing and natural ingredients of Ayurvedic products to align with the growing consumer interest in environmentally friendly and ethical products.
- **Improve Consumer Experience:** Companies should gather feedback regularly to identify areas for improving consumer satisfaction, particularly in product efficacy and availability.
- **Educational Initiatives:** Schools and universities could incorporate more information about Ayurvedic practices into their health and wellness curricula to further increase awareness and understanding among younger generations.

CONCLUSION

The growing interest in Ayurvedic medicines reflects a shift towards natural and holistic health solutions, particularly among younger demographics. This study reveals that while a significant portion of consumers are aware of and satisfied with Ayurvedic products, there is still room for improvement in terms of increasing awareness and understanding of these traditional remedies. The high level of satisfaction and continued use among consumers indicates strong potential for the Ayurvedic industry to expand and innovate, particularly in the areas of skincare and wellness products.

However, challenges remain, including the need for better consumer education about the benefits and safe use of Ayurvedic medicines, as well as the importance of sustainable sourcing practices. By addressing these challenges and focusing on enhancing product offerings, the Ayurvedic industry can continue to grow and contribute positively to health and wellness.

To ensure a sustainable future for Ayurvedic practices, it is crucial to promote the authenticity and quality of these products, while also raising awareness about their cultural significance and environmental impact. By doing so, the industry can not only meet the growing demand but also preserve the integrity of Ayurveda for future generations.

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Consumer Awareness and Attitudes towards Ayurvedic Medicines- A Study with Special Reference to Malappuram District, Kerala

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Consumer Awareness and Attitudes towards Ayurvedic Medicines- A Study with Special Reference to Malappuram District, Kerala

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Conflict of Interest

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