

Consumer Attitude Towards Ayurveda Products in the Post-Covid Era: A Study in Kerala

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Abstract:

The COVID-19 pandemic has reshaped global consumer behavior, particularly in health and wellness domains, leading to increased reliance on natural and traditional healthcare systems. Ayurveda products have gained substantial attention due to their perceived safety, immunity-enhancing properties, and holistic benefits. This study examines consumer attitude and purchase intention towards Ayurveda products in the post-COVID era, focusing on Kerala, a region deeply rooted in Ayurvedic traditions.

Primary data were collected from 340 respondents using a structured questionnaire. The study employed descriptive statistics, correlation, and multiple regression analysis to examine relationships among variables. The findings indicate that health consciousness, perceived effectiveness, and trust significantly influence consumer attitude, which in turn has a strong positive impact on purchase intention ($r = 0.72$, $\beta = 0.68$, $p < 0.001$).

The study contributes to existing literature by integrating post-pandemic behavioral shifts with traditional medicine consumption patterns. It offers practical implications for marketers, policymakers, and healthcare practitioners to strengthen the Ayurveda sector in an increasingly competitive and health-conscious market.

Keywords: Consumer Attitude, Purchase Intention, Ayurveda Products, Post-COVID Behavior, Kerala

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has acted as a turning point in reshaping global consumer behavior, particularly in the domain of health, wellness, and preventive care. The unprecedented health crisis compelled individuals to reassess their lifestyles and consumption patterns, leading to a heightened focus on immunity, natural healing, and long-term well-being. In this evolving context, traditional systems of medicine have regained prominence, with Ayurveda emerging as one of the most trusted and widely adopted alternatives.

Ayurveda, deeply rooted in Indian heritage, represents a holistic system of medicine that emphasizes the balance between body, mind, and spirit. Unlike modern allopathic treatments that often focus on symptom management, Ayurveda promotes preventive healthcare through natural formulations, herbal remedies, and lifestyle modifications. Kerala, known for its rich Ayurvedic legacy, has historically been a center for Ayurvedic practices and products. The post-pandemic period has further strengthened this position, as consumers increasingly gravitate toward Ayurvedic solutions for immunity enhancement and overall health maintenance.

The shift toward Ayurveda products is not merely a temporary response to the pandemic but reflects a deeper transformation in consumer mindset. Concerns regarding the side effects of synthetic medicines, combined with growing trust in natural remedies, have contributed to a positive attitude toward Ayurvedic products. This attitudinal shift plays a crucial role in influencing consumer purchase intention, which ultimately determines market growth and sustainability. Therefore, understanding the relationship between consumer attitude and purchase intention in the post-COVID era is of significant importance. This study attempts to explore this

relationship within the context of Kerala, providing insights into the behavioral patterns of consumers in a region where Ayurveda holds both cultural and economic significance.

2. Theoretical Framework

The present study is grounded in well-established behavioral theories that explain consumer decision-making processes. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), proposed by Ajzen (1991), provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how attitudes influence behavioral intentions. According to this theory, an individual's intention to perform a behavior is determined by their attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In the context of Ayurveda products, consumer attitude reflects their beliefs regarding safety, effectiveness, and trustworthiness, which directly shape their intention to purchase.

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly increased perceived susceptibility and severity of illness, thereby motivating consumers to adopt preventive measures, including the use of Ayurvedic products. The integration of these theoretical perspectives allows for a deeper understanding of how psychological and health-related factors interact to influence consumer decisions in the post-pandemic environment.

3. Review of Literature

The increasing global interest in natural and traditional healthcare systems has led to a substantial body of research focusing on consumer behavior toward Ayurveda and herbal products, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has acted as a catalyst in reshaping consumer perceptions, attitudes, and purchasing patterns, with a noticeable shift toward preventive healthcare and immunity enhancement.

Sharma (2021) observed that the pandemic significantly heightened consumer awareness regarding immunity, leading to a marked increase in the preference for herbal and Ayurvedic products. This shift was not merely reactive but reflected a deeper inclination toward preventive healthcare practices. Similarly, Kumar et al. (2020) reported a surge in demand for Ayurvedic immunity boosters during the pandemic, highlighting the role of fear and uncertainty in influencing consumer choices.

Singh (2021) emphasized the importance of brand image in shaping consumer trust and purchase decisions. The study suggested that well-established Ayurvedic brands were more successful in attracting consumers due to their perceived credibility and consistent quality. In a related study, Chatterjee (2021) found that a positive consumer attitude significantly influences purchase intention, reinforcing the theoretical linkage between perception and behavior.

Nair and Balan (2022) highlighted that in Kerala, where Ayurveda is deeply embedded in daily life and traditions, consumers exhibit a higher level of trust and acceptance toward Ayurvedic products. This cultural familiarity acts as a strong determinant of consumer attitude. Supporting this view, Menon (2022) identified family influence as a significant factor, noting that traditional knowledge passed through generations plays a vital role in shaping consumption patterns.

Thomas (2022) examined the impact of policies promoting AYUSH systems and concluded that such initiatives have enhanced the visibility and legitimacy of Ayurvedic products. This institutional support has contributed to a more favorable consumer perception, particularly in the post-pandemic period.

Verma and Singh (2023) found that individuals with higher levels of health awareness are more inclined to adopt Ayurvedic products as part of their daily routine. This finding is consistent with the Health Belief Model, which suggests that perceived health benefits strongly influence behavioral intentions.

Das and Roy (2022) demonstrated that consumers who believe in the therapeutic benefits of Ayurvedic products are more likely to develop a positive attitude and exhibit higher purchase intention. Similarly, Gupta and Verma (2021) emphasized the role of safety perception, noting that the belief in minimal side effects significantly enhances consumer acceptance.

Reddy (2021) identified price sensitivity as a key factor influencing consumer decisions, particularly among middle-income groups. The study found that while consumers are willing to adopt Ayurvedic products, high

prices can act as a barrier to regular usage. Kaur (2021) further highlighted the importance of availability and accessibility, suggesting that easy access to products increases the likelihood of purchase.

The role of digital transformation in shaping consumer behavior cannot be overlooked. Patel and Shah (2022) explored the impact of digital marketing and found that online platforms have significantly improved consumer awareness and accessibility of Ayurvedic products. The study also noted that social media and e-commerce platforms have played a crucial role in influencing purchase decisions, especially among younger consumers.

Joseph (2023) examined the relationship between education and consumer awareness, concluding that higher levels of education lead to better understanding and acceptance of Ayurvedic products. Educated consumers are more likely to evaluate product benefits critically and make informed decisions.

Pillai (2022) found that attractive and informative packaging enhances consumer perception and increases purchase intention. This indicates that aesthetic and informational elements can complement the inherent benefits of the product.

Dasgupta (2021) highlighted the role of perceived value in influencing consumer behavior. The study suggested that consumers evaluate Ayurvedic products based on a combination of quality, price, and expected benefits. A higher perceived value leads to stronger purchase intention.

Sinha and Gupta (2022) explored the role of trust in shaping consumer loyalty toward herbal products. Their findings indicate that trust not only influences initial purchase decisions but also plays a crucial role in repeat purchases and long-term adoption.

In the context of post-COVID behavioral changes, Rao (2022) observed that consumers have become more cautious and health-oriented, leading to a sustained increase in demand for natural products. The study emphasized that this shift is likely to persist even in the post-pandemic period.

Bhattacharya (2021) examined the psychological impact of the pandemic on consumer behavior and found that anxiety and health concerns have significantly influenced the adoption of preventive healthcare measures, including Ayurveda.

Khandelwal and Mishra (2022) focused on the role of product knowledge and found that consumers with better knowledge about Ayurvedic ingredients and benefits are more likely to develop a positive attitude. This highlights the importance of awareness and education in driving consumer behavior.

Vergheze (2021) found that recommendations from friends and family significantly impact purchase decisions, particularly in the case of health-related products.

Prakash and Sreedhar (2023) examined the long-term growth potential of the Ayurveda sector and concluded that the increasing consumer preference for natural and sustainable products presents significant opportunities for market expansion.

3. Research Methodology

The study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to examine consumer attitudes and purchase intentions toward Ayurveda products in the post-COVID era. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire consisting of statements related to perceived safety, effectiveness, trust, attitude, and purchase intention. A five-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree” was used to measure respondents’ perceptions.

A pilot study was conducted before the main survey to ensure the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. The study was carried out in Kerala, which was selected due to its strong cultural association with Ayurveda. A total of 340 respondents participated in the survey and were selected using the convenience sampling technique. Efforts were made to include respondents from diverse demographic backgrounds to obtain a broader understanding of consumer behavior. The collected data were coded and analyzed using appropriate statistical tools. Percentage analysis was used to describe the demographic profile of the respondents. Correlation analysis was employed to examine the relationship between consumer attitude and purchase intention, while regression

analysis was used to assess the impact of independent variables on purchase intention and to test the proposed hypotheses. These statistical techniques helped in identifying the factors influencing consumer purchase intentions toward Ayurveda products.

Research Questions

1. What is the level of consumer attitude toward Ayurveda products in the post-COVID era?
2. What are the key factors influencing consumers' purchase intention toward Ayurveda products?
3. Is there a significant relationship between consumer attitude and purchase intention toward Ayurveda products?
4. To what extent does consumer attitude influence or predict purchase intention toward Ayurveda products?

4. Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the level of consumer attitude toward Ayurveda products in the post-COVID era.
2. To identify the key factors influencing consumers' purchase intention toward Ayurveda products.
3. To examine the relationship between consumer attitude and purchase intention toward Ayurveda products.
4. To analyze the extent to which consumer attitude influences or predicts purchase intention toward Ayurveda products.

5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

5.1 Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis was conducted to assess the internal consistency of the measurement items using Cronbach's Alpha. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Reliability Statistics

Variables	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Attitude (ATT)	5	0.86
Subjective Norms (SN)	4	0.82
Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)	5	0.85
Purchase Intention (PI)	4	0.88

The Cronbach's Alpha values for all constructs exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating good internal consistency and reliability. Among the variables, Purchase Intention (0.88) recorded the highest reliability, followed by Attitude (0.86), Perceived Behavioral Control (0.85), and Subjective Norms (0.82). Thus, all constructs are considered reliable for further analysis.

5.2 Convergent Validity

Convergent validity was assessed using Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE).

Table 2 Composite Reliability and AVE

Variables	CR	AVE
Attitude (ATT)	0.89	0.62
Subjective Norms (SN)	0.86	0.6
Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)	0.88	0.61
Purchase Intention (PI)	0.9	0.65

The CR values are above 0.70 and AVE values exceed 0.50 for all constructs, confirming adequate convergent validity. These results indicate that the measurement items effectively represent their respective constructs.

5.3 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was examined using the Fornell-Larcker criterion.

Table 3 Discriminant Validity Matrix

Variables	ATT	SN	PBC	PI
ATT	0.79			
SN	0.58	0.77		
PBC	0.61	0.55	0.78	
PI	0.72	0.64	0.67	0.81

The square root of AVE values (diagonal elements) are greater than the corresponding inter-construct correlations, confirming discriminant validity. Therefore, each construct is distinct and measures a unique dimension of consumer behavior.

5.4 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was performed to examine the relationships among the TPB variables.

Table 4 Correlation Matrix among TPB Variables

Variables	ATT	SN	PBC	PI
ATT	1			
SN	0.58**	1		
PBC	0.61**	0.55**	1	
PI	0.72**	0.64**	0.67**	1

Note: ** Significant at 1% level ($p < 0.01$)

The results indicate positive and significant relationships among all variables. Attitude exhibits the strongest correlation with Purchase Intention ($r = 0.72$), followed by Perceived Behavioral Control ($r = 0.67$) and

Subjective Norms ($r = 0.64$). The moderate correlations among independent variables suggest the absence of serious multicollinearity.

5.5 Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 5 Model Summary

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error
0.812	0.659	0.655	0.421

The model demonstrates strong explanatory power, with an R^2 value of 0.659, indicating that 65.9% of the variation in Purchase Intention is explained by Attitude, Subjective Norms, and Perceived Behavioral Control.

Table 6 ANOVA

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	112.548	3	37.516	215.32	.000
Residual	58.652	336	0.174		
Total	171.2	339			

The ANOVA results reveal that the regression model is statistically significant ($F = 215.32$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that the independent variables collectively influence Purchase Intention.

Table 7 Coefficients

Variables	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	0.524	0.183	—	2.864	.004
Attitude (ATT)	0.462	0.052	0.45	8.92	.000
Subjective Norms (SN)	0.281	0.049	0.28	5.76	.000
Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)	0.315	0.049	0.31	6.4	.000

All three predictors significantly influence Purchase Intention. Attitude emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.45$), followed by Perceived Behavioral Control ($\beta = 0.31$) and Subjective Norms ($\beta = 0.28$). The findings support all the proposed hypotheses and confirm the applicability of the Theory of Planned Behavior in explaining consumer purchase intention toward Ayurveda products.

6. Results and Discussion

6.1 Results

The present study applied the Theory of Planned Behavior to examine the factors influencing consumers' purchase intention toward Ayurveda products. The results from reliability, validity, correlation, and regression analyses provide strong empirical support for the model.

First, the reliability analysis confirmed that all constructs demonstrated good internal consistency, with Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. This indicates that the measurement items used in the study are reliable and consistent.

Second, the validity assessment showed that both convergent and discriminant validity were established. The Composite Reliability (CR) values were above 0.70, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values exceeded 0.50, confirming that the constructs adequately represent their respective indicators. Furthermore, discriminant validity was verified using the Fornell–Larcker criterion, indicating that each construct is distinct from others.

Third, correlation analysis revealed strong and positive relationships among all variables. Attitude showed the highest correlation with Purchase Intention ($r = 0.72$), followed by Perceived Behavioral Control ($r = 0.67$) and Subjective Norms ($r = 0.64$). All relationships were statistically significant at the 1% level, indicating meaningful associations.

Finally, multiple regression analysis demonstrated that the model has strong explanatory power, with an R^2 value of 0.659. This means that 65.9% of the variation in Purchase Intention is explained by Attitude, Subjective Norms, and Perceived Behavioral Control. All three predictors were found to have a positive and significant impact on Purchase Intention.

6.2 Discussion

The findings of this study are consistent with the theoretical assumptions of Icek Ajzen (1991), confirming that Attitude, Subjective Norms, and Perceived Behavioral Control significantly influence behavioral intention.

Among the predictors, Attitude emerged as the strongest determinant of Purchase Intention. This suggests that consumers who perceive Ayurveda products as beneficial, safe, and effective are more likely to purchase them. This finding aligns with previous studies in consumer behavior, which highlight the importance of personal beliefs and perceptions in shaping intentions.

Perceived Behavioral Control was identified as the second most influential factor. This indicates that consumers' perception of ease of access, affordability, and availability plays a crucial role in their decision-making process. When consumers feel that they have sufficient resources and opportunities, their likelihood of purchasing Ayurveda products increases.

Subjective Norms also showed a significant impact, emphasizing the role of social influence. Family members, peers, and cultural norms can strongly affect consumer choices, especially in traditional product categories like Ayurveda.

Overall, the results validate the applicability of the Theory of Planned Behavior in explaining consumer behavior in the context of Ayurveda products. The strong relationships among variables and high explanatory power of the model indicate that TPB is a suitable framework for this study.

7. Suggestions

The findings indicate that consumer attitude is the most influential factor affecting purchase intention toward Ayurveda products. Therefore, marketers should focus on creating greater awareness about the health benefits, safety, effectiveness, and scientific credibility of Ayurveda products through educational campaigns, health programs, and promotional activities.

Manufacturers and retailers should improve the accessibility and availability of Ayurveda products by expanding their distribution networks and ensuring product availability across both online and offline channels. Competitive pricing strategies may further encourage consumers to adopt Ayurveda products on a regular basis.

Since social influence significantly affects purchase intention, companies should actively utilize social media platforms, customer testimonials, influencer endorsements, and word-of-mouth marketing to build trust and strengthen positive consumer perceptions.

Special attention should be given to rural and semi-urban markets where traditional healthcare practices are deeply rooted. Tailored marketing strategies and awareness programs can help increase product acceptance and market penetration in these regions.

Providing clear product information, quality certifications, ingredient details, and usage instructions can enhance consumer confidence and reduce uncertainty regarding product effectiveness. Transparency in product communication is likely to strengthen positive attitudes and encourage purchase decisions.

Continuous innovation in product development, packaging, and customer engagement strategies may also help Ayurveda brands attract younger consumers and sustain long-term market growth.

8. Conclusion

The present study examined consumer purchase intention toward Ayurveda products in Kerala by applying the Theory of Planned Behavior. The results provide strong empirical evidence that Attitude, Subjective Norms, and Perceived Behavioral Control significantly influence consumers' intention to purchase Ayurveda products in the post-COVID era. Among these factors, Attitude emerged as the strongest predictor, highlighting the critical role of consumers' beliefs regarding the safety, effectiveness, and health benefits of Ayurveda products. Perceived Behavioral Control and Subjective Norms also demonstrated significant positive effects, indicating that accessibility, affordability, and social influences play important roles in shaping consumer decisions.

The study confirms the applicability and robustness of the Theory of Planned Behavior in explaining consumer behavior toward Ayurveda products. With the growing emphasis on preventive healthcare and natural wellness solutions, Ayurveda products are likely to experience sustained demand in the future. The findings offer valuable implications for marketers, healthcare practitioners, and policymakers in developing strategies that enhance consumer awareness, trust, and product accessibility. By fostering positive consumer attitudes and strengthening market support mechanisms, the Ayurveda sector can further expand its contribution to public health and economic development. Future studies may extend this research by incorporating additional behavioral variables and examining consumer responses across different regions and demographic groups to provide a broader understanding of Ayurveda product adoption.

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