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Factors Affecting Consumer Behaviour Towards Health and Wellness Products: An Indian Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The Indian health and wellness products industry has experienced robust growth over the past decade, driven by rising disposable incomes, greater health awareness, and government initiatives promoting preventive healthcare. Valued at over USD 20 billion in 2024, the sector spans nutraceuticals, dietary supplements, herbal remedies, fitness foods, and personal care items. Indian consumer behavior towards health and wellness products has evolved rapidly over the past decade, reflecting shifts in affluence, digital access, and cultural values. Initially dominated by traditional Ayurvedic and herbal remedies, the market has expanded to include scientifically formulated supplements, functional foods, and personalized nutrition. Today's consumers blend heritage trust with modern validation: they seek products rooted in natural ingredients yet demand clinical evidence and professional endorsements before purchase.

In order to identify and evaluate various factors affecting Indian consumers' behaviour towards health and wellness products, this study employed the **factor analysis** technique. Using principal component analysis with Varimax rotation on survey data from 79 respondents, eight distinct factors were extracted explaining 73.26% of total variance, demonstrating excellent sampling adequacy (KMO = 0.762) and significant intercorrelations ($p < 0.001$).

The study showcases that the following eight traits define Indian consumers' overall behaviour towards health and wellness products:

1. Selection of Product with natural ingredients as per health status/needs, scientific validation, and professional advice
2. Influences on decision making, including traditional formulations, eco-friendly packaging, ingredient scrutiny, price comparisons, and ethical practices
3. Digital marketing and online-driven behavior, characterized by celebrity endorsements, influencer impact, and promotional incentives
4. Product quality, brand reputation, health benefits, and preventive healthcare orientation
5. Offline herd behavior and subscription offers
6. Official information reliance, product certification, and clinical testing validation
7. Online purchasing comfort and self-research dependency
8. Price sensitivity

Keywords: Health and Wellness products, Indian Consumer Behaviour, Factor Analysis.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the global health and wellness industry has changed significantly. It has shifted from a consumer-focused lifestyle trend to a well-organized, research-supported, and competitive market. According to the Global Wellness Institute, the wellness economy was valued at USD 5.6 trillion in 2022 and is expected to exceed USD 8.5 trillion by 2027. This growth is consistent across various segments, such as nutrition, mental health, preventive healthcare, and wellness technology. Reports from Vision Research and Spherical Insights show a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.5% to 7.3%, driven by a growing awareness of preventive care and the emergence of data-driven, personalized healthcare solutions.

The sector includes various areas, such as beauty and anti-aging, which holds a 22% to 24% share; nutrition and weight loss at 15% to 16%; fitness and physical activity with about a 14% CAGR; mental health support; wellness tourism, which reached USD 850 billion in 2021; and corporate wellness services, projected to be around USD 100 billion in 2024 (grandviewresearch.com). At the same time, the pharmaceutical industry, which traditionally focused on treating diseases, is quickly moving into wellness by using biotech, plant-based therapies, digital health platforms, and integrated research and development pipelines. Large pharma giants as well as innovative & progressive startups together highlight market trends where companies connect with emerging wellness narratives to meet the increasing demand for comprehensive, preventive, and sustainable healthcare.

From a consumer behaviour perspective, COVID-19 pandemic was a turning point, especially in a country like India that has a long history and legacy of herbal wellness products. During this time, the government set up over 150,000 Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs) under Ayushman Bharat, recording 88 million screenings in the initial phase. Consumer attention has shifted significantly from cure to preventive healthcare, including immunity boosts, nutrition, and mental health. Seizing this opportunity, Indian businesses ramped up production of Ayurvedic and nutraceutical products; for example Indore alone recorded over ₹1,000 crore (USD 120 million) in herbal product sales during peak years (TOI, 2024). Meanwhile, startups like HealthifyMe, Cure.fit, and GOQii capitalized on digital wellness by offering AI-powered nutritionists, online therapy, and personalized fitness plans. HealthifyMe, for instance, exceeded ₹100 crore in revenue by 2020, gaining over 30 million app users (Thehindubusinessline.com, 2020).

The recent wave of innovation in this sector is driven by bio-convergence, where biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, and digital tools come together to provide scalable, personalized wellness solutions. This intersection also brings important business aspects such as regulatory approvals, intellectual property rights, pricing strategies, consumer trust, and ethical marketing. Companies demonstrate scientific effectiveness and create engaging brand stories that connect clinical credibility with wellness goals. For instance, HealthifyMe built its brand story around empowering individuals to achieve their wellness goals through personalized, data-driven plans. This often involves showcasing user success stories and testimonials that highlight transformations and connect with the emotional aspect of health and fitness.

A number of studies suggest that particularly Indian consumers have shifted from reactive healthcare to proactive and outcome-oriented healthcare measures, treating health as a structured protocol rather than just a preference. Preventive routines are now normal, most people adopt daily wellness practices, and there is a surge in demand for targeted solutions. Digital self-monitoring also dominates in the context of health apps or wearables, with AI-powered features increasingly attracting consumers. Studies indicate that consumers today place greater emphasis on quality and transparency, with many willing to pay a premium for verified benefits. In most categories, younger and female consumers are driving the adoption of new healthcare products, as they are also leading trends in gym memberships and digital fitness. However, this demographic tends to show low brand loyalty, reflecting a more rational and results-oriented approach to choosing healthcare products and services based on personal experience and measurable outcomes. For instance, PwC 2024 Voice of the Consumer Survey reveals that the Consumers willing to pay 9.7% sustainability premium, even when the cost-of-living and inflationary concerns weigh high. Similar findings were also claimed by studies by Jhala, S.Y. & Dave, D. (2025); Satyapriya et al. (2021); and EY India (2025).

In the context of the dynamic nature of consumer behaviour, this research explores various preferences and factors affecting the choices and overall preference of Indian consumer behaviour towards health and wellness products.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The predominant theoretical framework employed in health and wellness consumer behavior research is the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which demonstrates robust predictive validity across diverse cultural contexts. In general, consumer behavior towards health and wellness products shows significant cross-cultural variations, as established by comparative studies across different marketplaces. As demonstrated by Ruiz et al. (2021), health behaviours during the COVID-19 pandemic in several countries revealed distinct patterns in health-conscious consumption based on cultural values and economic development levels.

In addition to cultural variations, there are numerous other variables that affect consumer behaviour towards health and wellness products. For instance, a study by Ali and Ali (2020) recognized the willingness to pay as one of the crucial factors for health and wellness products which is associated positively with income, education, and product benefit awareness. However, economic limitations remain significant barriers to wellness product adoption. Price sensitivity varies considerably across markets, with emerging economies demonstrating higher price elasticity compared to developed countries.

In another study by Wang et al. (2023) health consciousness was found to be a significant factor, which contributes significantly to the rise in organic food consumption, while herding behavior was also found to be a contributing factor. This indicates that both individual health awareness and social influence mechanisms operate in sync to drive wellness consumption.

On the other hand, several Indian contemporary studies indicate that consumers in India have moved from reactive healthcare to preventive wellness engagement. Studies report that approximately 70% of Indians now integrate daily preventive routines—such as nutrition planning, fitness regimes, and regular health screenings—into their lifestyles, signifying a shift from illness-focused to wellness-focused mindsets (Kantar 2025).

Digital tools also play a crucial role in health management. Recent surveys point out that 80% of Indian wellness consumers utilize health applications or wearable devices for monitoring diet, activity, and vitals, replacing traditional measures such as healthcare professional consultation for routine guidance (Galengrowth, 2025).

Demographic segmentation reveals distinct behavioral patterns. Younger consumers (Millennials and Gen Z) drive digital wellness engagement and protein supplement consumption, with 443 million millennials averaging INR 4,000 monthly on health products (Loestro, 2025). Female participation in fitness has risen to 45% of gym memberships, marking a significant departure from previously male-dominated sports cultures.

In spite of increasing health awareness and priorities, Indian consumers are yet to demonstrate low brand loyalty in the wellness market: 80–90% of consumers report willingness to switch service providers for superior outcomes or experiences, despite high brand awareness levels (BCG Report, 2025).

Studies have also proved the relationship between consumer behavior and marketing mix of Ayurvedic products in Thiruvananthapuram, Aanand and Asha (2024) who found a strong positive relationship between the four Ps of marketing and consumer behavior, with product quality, safety, and authenticity emerging as primary influence factors. Another study by Kumar and Kumar (2023) found that the consumer perceptions of Ayurveda products is highly influenced by education level and occupation of the consumers.

While existing literature delineates broader shifts in consumer behavior and indicate various factors that influence overall consumer behaviour. In this context, this current study is placed to evaluate the dynamic nature of consumer behaviour towards Health and Wellness products.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study utilises a quantitative research design with a structured questionnaire using MS Forms to collect the data. The questionnaire included questions related to various variables that were identified from literature such as: Marketing Influence; Source of Information; Product Innovation Perception; Social Media Influence; Intention to Buy Online; Health Consciousness and Awareness; Product Quality and Safety Perceptions; Brand Trust and Credibility; Price Sensitivity and Value Perception; Traditional vs. Modern Product Preference; Purchase Decision Influences; and Usage and Satisfaction Experience.

The survey was conducted via online channels, such as email and WhatsApp groups, to increase outreach and attract a diverse sample and representative of the whole. The respondents were encouraged to share the survey with their family and friends to increase the number of responses in different age groups and improve the generalizability of the findings. The data collection was conducted within a short time frame but providing participants with an ample opportunity to complete the survey. By the end of the collection period, a total of 79 responses were gathered. The data was then tabulated and analysed using MS Excel and SPSS to observe trends, patterns, and consumer behaviour towards Health and Wellness products using factor analysis.

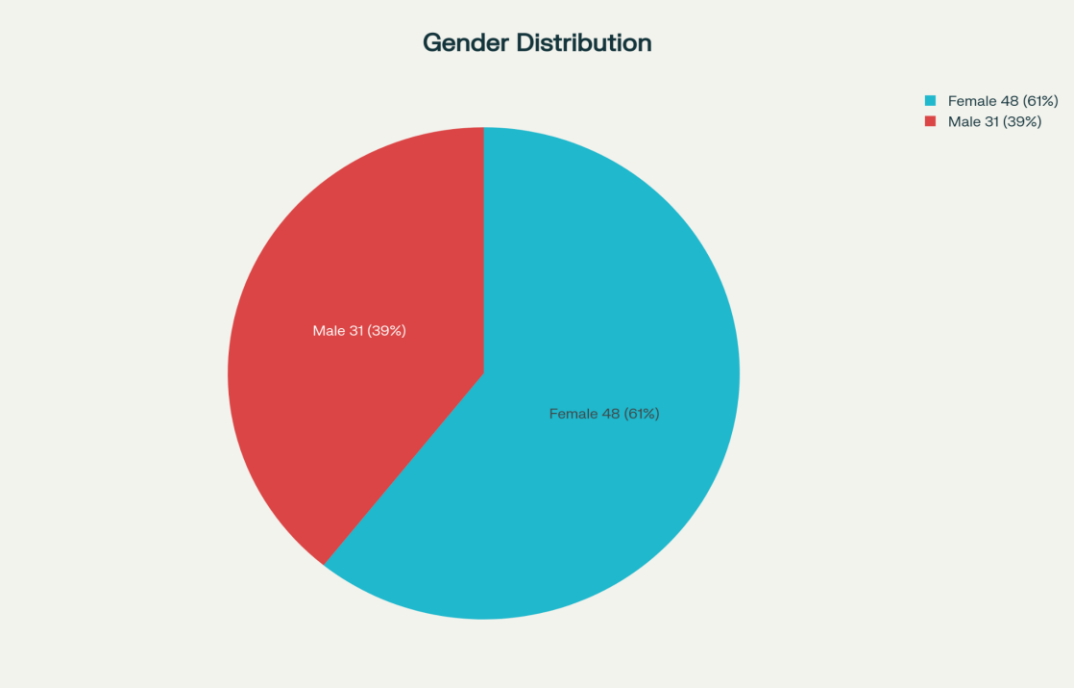
RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

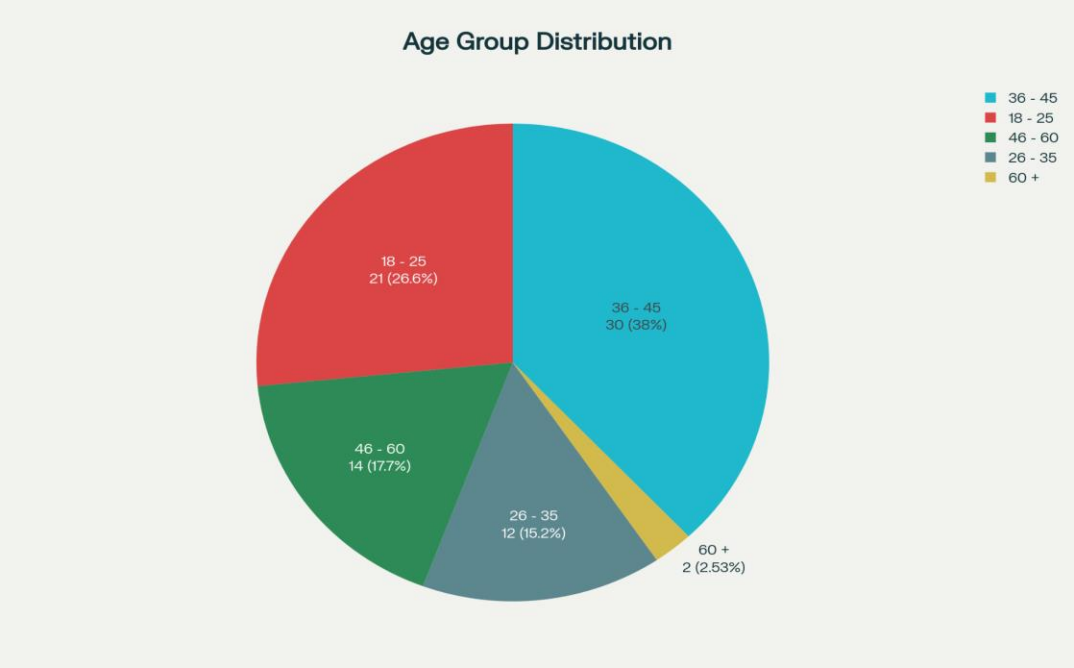
Descriptive Statistics:

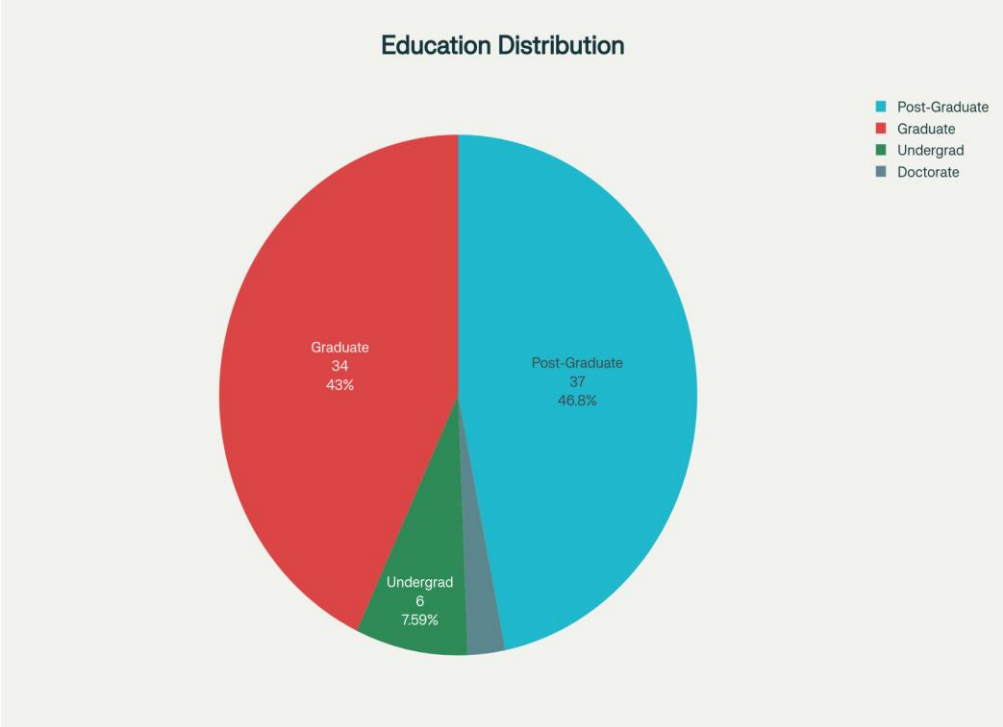
The survey respondents represent a predominantly female (61%), urban (91% metro city), and highly educated demographic profile with 90% holding graduate or post-graduate qualifications. The age distribution shows a concentration of middle-aged adults, with the 36-45 age group forming the largest segment at 38%, followed by young adults aged 18-25 at 27%.

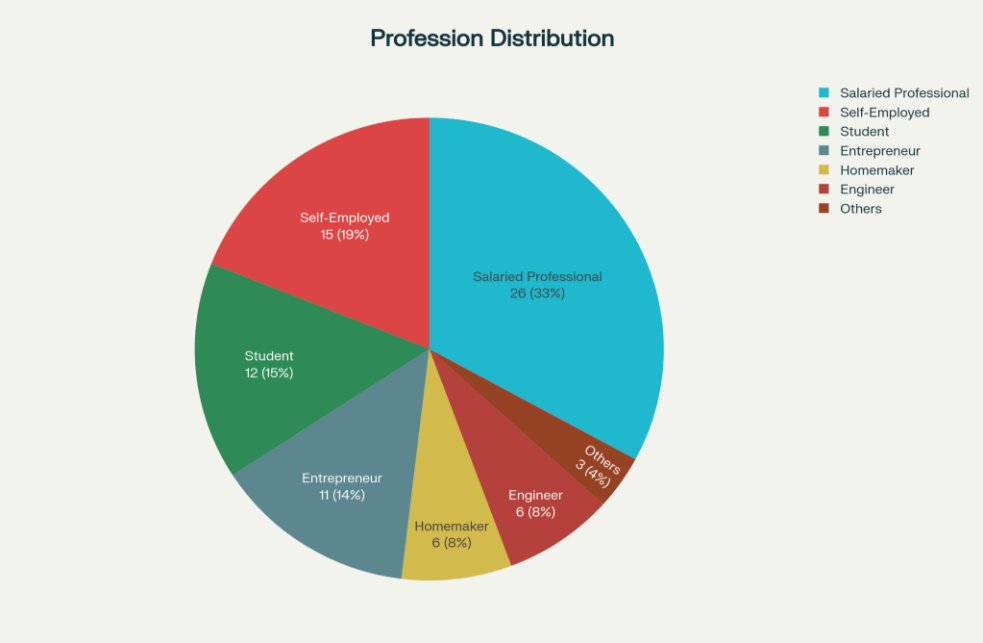
Professionally, the group is diverse yet career-oriented, with salaried professionals comprising the largest category at 33%, followed by self-employed individuals (19%) and students (15%). The geographic concentration in metropolitan areas (91%) suggests an urban-centric sample with limited rural representation (1%).

This demographic composition reflects a sample of educated, urban professionals and young adults, with a slight female majority, primarily residing in major cities and engaged in various professional pursuits ranging from traditional employment to entrepreneurship and continuing education.









Factor Analysis:

Before conducting the factor analysis, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test of sampling adequacy and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were conducted to check the data suitability for confirmatory factor analysis.The results from KMO and Bartlett's Test indicate that the data were found to be highly suitable for factor analysis. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy being: 0.762, is considered "good" according to standard interpretation guidelines.

The Bartlett's Test which examines the correlation matrix is significantly different from an identity matrix (where all correlations would be zero), found to be Highly significant result ($p < 0.001$). This indicates that the correlation between variables is sufficiently large for factor analysis. On the other hand, the large Chi-Square value (1229.26) with 378 degrees of freedom strongly rejects the null hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix. This confirms that there are meaningful relationships between the variables that can be captured through factor analysis.

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		**0.762**
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1229.264
	df	-378
	Sig.	.000

Thus, both tests provide strong evidence that the dataset is appropriate for factor analysis. The researcher progressed with factor analysis, as these preliminary tests indicate that the technique will produce meaningful and interpretable results from the data.

The Total Variance Explained table presents the results of factor analysis across three stages of extraction and rotation. The analysis extracted 8 factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 (Kaiser criterion) with a cumulative variance explained: 73.259%.

Total Variance Explained									
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	**% of Variance**	**Cumulative %**	**Total**	**% of Variance**	**Cumulative %**	**Total**	**% of Variance**	**Cumulative %**
1	7.882	28.150	28.150	7.882	28.150	28.150	3.959	14.141	14.141
2	3.460	12.358	40.507	3.460	12.358	40.507	3.723	13.295	27.436
3	2.421	8.645	49.152	2.421	8.645	49.152	3.108	11.102	38.537
4	1.890	6.749	55.901	1.890	6.749	55.901	2.439	8.711	47.248
5	1.459	5.211	61.112	1.459	5.211	61.112	2.110	7.535	54.783
6	1.307	4.668	65.781	1.307	4.668	65.781	2.100	7.499	62.282
7	1.063	3.796	69.577	1.063	3.796	69.577	1.589	5.673	67.955
8	1.031	3.682	73.259	1.031	3.682	**73.259**	1.485	5.304	73.259
9	.862	3.080	76.339						
10	.781	2.791	79.129						
11	.733	2.617	81.747						
12	.614	2.192	83.939						
13	.532	1.901	85.839						
14	.531	1.896	87.735						
15	.471	1.683	89.418						
16	.398	1.423	90.841						
17	.397	1.416	92.257						
18	.311	1.110	93.367						
19	.276	.987	94.354						
20	.261	.932	95.287						
21	.242	.866	96.153						
22	.214	.763	96.916						
23	.208	.743	97.659						
24	.169	.605	98.263						
25	.150	.536	98.799						
26	.139	.498	99.297						
27	.113	.402	99.700						
28	.084	.300	100.000						
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.									

The rotated factor loading matrix shows how each observed variable clusters onto the eight extracted factors after Varimax rotation, which sharpens distinctions between factors by maximizing high loadings and minimizing low ones. Each cell of the following table represents the correlation (loading) between a variable (Variable 1 – Variable 28) and a factor; loadings above roughly 0.50, which is true for most of the loaded variables, indicate strong associations.

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6	Factor 7	Factor 8
VAR001	0.687							
VAR002	0.818							
VAR003				0.518				
VAR004				0.547				
VAR005				0.825				
VAR006				0.787				
VAR007								0.753
VAR008	0.605							
VAR009	0.749							
VAR010					0.850			
VAR011	0.591							
VAR012			0.804					
VAR013							**0.418**	
VAR014		0.569						
VAR015					0.673			
VAR016			0.799					
VAR017			0.849					
VAR018		0.540						
VAR019						0.742		
VAR020		0.554						
VAR021		0.706						
VAR022		0.751						
VAR023		0.544						
VAR024					**0.361**			
VAR025							0.734	
VAR026						0.527		
VAR027		0.671						
VAR028						0.518		

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 21 iterations.

Labelling or Naming of the Factors:
The rotated factor loading matrix, the following labelling of factors is suggested in the light of variable item loading.

FACTOR-1: Selection of Product with natural ingredients as per Health Status / Needs as advised by doctor or dietician.		
Variable No.	**Description**	**Loading Value**
2	I regularly monitor my health status and nutritional needs.	0.818
9	While selecting a health & wellness product, I give top priority to: Scientific validation	0.749
1	I actively seek information about the health benefits of products before purchasing.	0.687
8	While selecting a health & wellness product, I give top priority to: Natural ingredients	0.605
11	My health & wellness product choices are influenced by: Doctor's or dietician's opinion	0.591

As per rotated matrix, the Factor 1 represents mainly consumers' selection of health and wellness products based on natural ingredients, scientific validation, and professional advice. Each item's loading value indicates its correlation with this underlying dimension: 'Health status and Nutritional needs' has the highest loading (0.818), followed by prioritizing scientific validation (0.749) and natural ingredients (0.605). Actively seeking information about health benefits before purchase loads at 0.687, while doctor or dietician's recommendations load at 0.591. Together, these loadings suggest that consumers choose products as per their health and nutritional needs, give priority to scientific validation and natural ingredients. They tend to seek information on health benefits and also consider the opinion of a doctor or dietician.

FACTOR-2: Factor influencing decision making		
22	My purchase decisions are influenced by the following product-related factors: I prefer Ayurvedic and traditional products over modern supplements.	0.751
21	My purchase decisions are influenced by the following product-related factors: Innovative packaging (eco-friendly designs) makes me more likely to purchase.	0.706
27	Factors that strengthen my confidence in a product include: I thoroughly check ingredient lists before buying.	0.671
14	My health & wellness product choices are influenced by: I check multiple sources to compare prices before buying.	0.569
20	My purchase decisions are influenced by the following product-related factors: I prefer products that introduce new natural ingredients.	0.554
23	When it comes to purchasing health & wellness supplements, I tend to: I feel comfortable buying from physical stores (pharmacies, supermarkets).	0.544
18	My purchase decisions are shaped by the following marketing and brand-related factors: A company's ethical practices and social responsibility matter to me.	0.540

Factor-2 primarily indicates the decision-making dimensions. As per responses, preference for Ayurvedic and traditional formulations is highest among respondents, which loads most heavily at 0.751. The next most influential consideration is the emphasis on eco-friendly and innovative packaging (0.706), showing that sustainable design significantly impacts their purchase choices. Thoroughly checking ingredient lists before buying (0.671) price comparison across multiple sources follows (0.569) also play a critical role. Such consumers' comfort with purchasing from physical stores is reasonable which loads at 0.544. Ethical considerations, including a company's social responsibility and ethical practices, load at 0.540, and finally, preference for products introducing new natural ingredients loads at 0.554, which indicates that innovation is also somewhat important to consumers.

FACTOR-3: Digital Marketing and Online Head Behaviour		
17	My purchase decisions are shaped by the following marketing and brand-related factors: Celebrity endorsements make me more likely to try a product.	0.849
12	My health & wellness product choices are influenced by: Social media influencers / self-claimed health experts	0.804
16	My purchase decisions are shaped by the following marketing and brand-related factors: Promotional offers (samples, discounts) encourage me to try products.	0.799

Factor 3 can be labelled as 'Digital Marketing and Online-Herd Behavior,' which comprises three items that reflect the influence of online marketing strategies on health and wellness purchase decisions. The strongest indicator is the impact of celebrity endorsements (loading 0.849), suggesting that respondents are mostly influenced by celebrities. The other factors influencing purchase decisions are social media influencers and self-claimed health experts (loading 0.804), and close behind are promotional offers - such as free samples and discounts - (loading 0.799). This resonates with most health and wellness companies' marketing approaches to target health-conscious consumers.

FACTOR-4: Product Quality, Brand Reputation, Health Benefits and Preventive Motives		
5	While selecting a health & wellness product, I give top priority to: Product quality	0.825
6	While selecting a health & wellness product, I give top priority to: Brand reputation	0.787
4	While selecting a health & wellness product, I give top priority to: Health benefits	0.547
3	My approach to health and wellness is reflected in the following statements: I consider preventive healthcare more important than curative treatment.	0.518

The factor-4 largely depicts the attributes of 'Product Quality, Brand Reputation, Health Benefits, and Preventive Motives' where the strongest indicator is prioritizing product quality (loading 0.825), next are brand reputation (loading 0.787), and priority to health benefits (loading 0.547). Lastly, the consideration of preventive healthcare was found to be more important than curative treatment (loading 0.518).

FACTOR-5: Offline Herd Behaviour and Subscription Offers		
10	My health & wellness product choices are influenced by: Family members' opinions	0.850
15	My health & wellness product choices are influenced by: I tend to buy supplements that are popular among my friends or social circle.	0.673
24	When it comes to purchasing health & wellness supplements, I tend to: I am more likely to reorder if a seller offers subscription/auto-refill services.	0.361

Factor-5 indicates the behaviour of consumers towards- 'Offline Herd Behaviour and Subscription Offers.' At the top, family members' opinions load most strongly at 0.850, indicating that respondents rely heavily on trusted relatives when deciding which supplements to buy. Next are friends or social circles, with a loading of 0.673 who also influence the decision-making process. Surprisingly, such consumers also prefer subscription or auto-refill services from sellers (loading of 0.361) – although very low association but they tend to remain loyal to selected products and brands as compared to others.

FACTOR-6: Official Information, Product Certification and Clinical Testing & Validation		
19	My purchase decisions are shaped by the following marketing and brand-related factors: I trust information from official brand websites over social media posts.	0.742
26	Factors that strengthen my confidence in a product include: Product certification from recognized authorities influences my decision.	0.527
28	Factors that strengthen my confidence in a product include: I trust products that have undergone clinical testing and validation.	0.518

Factor 6 can be labelled as 'Official Information, Product Certification, and Clinical Testing & Validation.' This factor comprises three items that vary in their influence on consumer confidence. The strongest contributor is trust in information from official brand websites over social media posts (loading 0.742), indicating that respondents rely most heavily on authoritative, brand-controlled sources. Next is product certification from recognized authorities (loading 0.527) and finally, consumers prefer those products which undergo clinical testing and validation (loading 0.518).

FACTOR-7: Online Purchase and Self Research Dependency		
25	When it comes to purchasing health & wellness supplements, I tend to: I feel comfortable purchasing products through online marketplaces	0.734
13	My health & wellness product choices are influenced by: I rely primarily on my own research rather than professional advice.	0.418
FACTOR-8: Price		
7	While selecting a health & wellness product, I give top priority to: Price	0.753

Factor 7 represents 'Online Purchase and Self-Research Dependency,' which indicates that consumers feel comfortable with purchasing wellness products through online marketplaces (loading 0.734) but at the same time, they tend to conduct their own research rather than any professional advice (loading 0.418).

Whereas, Factor 8 loads only Price element (0.753), indicating that the cost considerations are the most potent single determinant of product selection, which is not directly associated with any other factor or variable.

CONCLUSION

This research study with eight-factor solution, explaining over 73 percent of total variances, describes a multidimensional consumer behaviour towards health and well products. Factor-1 (selection of product with natural ingredients, scientific validation, and professional advice) emerged as the most robust construct, explaining 28.15 percent of variance. It indicates that consumers in health and wellness products demand evidence of efficacy and rely on professional recommendations to align product choices with individual health needs. Factor-2 (decision-making influences) highlights traditional and experiential drivers, illustrating cultural heritage, sustainability, and value assessment and ethical brand reputation. Factor-3 (digital marketing and online-herd behaviour) indicated that celebrity endorsements, social media influencers, and promotional offers have significant impact over consumer behaviour. Factor-4 (product quality, brand reputation, health benefits, and preventive motives) revealed that product quality and brand reputation are the primary drivers, with lesser but meaningful emphasis on health benefits and preventive healthcare orientation for Indian health and wellness consumers.

Factor-5 (Offline Herd Behaviour and Subscription Offers) confirmed that family influence and peer popularity are among the major offline drivers while subscription/auto-refill preferences can play a supporting role in consumer decision making. Factor-6 (official information, product certification, and clinical testing & validation) indicates that consumer behaviour is centered around trust in authoritative sources, recognized certifications, and clinical validation. Factor-7 (Online Purchase and Self-Research Dependency) suggests that many consumers feel comfortable with online purchase (e-commerce) with reliance on personal research over professional guidance. Finally, Factor-8 (Price) stands alone, signifying that cost considerations constitute an independent and dominant determinant of purchase decisions. Price sensitivity transcends other constructs, indicating that affordability and perceived value are paramount regardless of product attributes or marketing influences.

Thus, we may conclude that Indian consumer behaviour showcases these eight traits that define their overall consumer behavior towards health and wellness products.

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