Patanjali : Emergence of a New Star on the Indian FMCG Horizon

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Abstract

In the present day world, life has become more complex and competitive; people are under more stress than before because of lifestyle leading to various diseases at an early age. The vast field of Ayurveda is gaining popularity across the world because of its amazing therapeutic values. Consumers are demanding more herbal and organic products across different categories of personal and home care. Patanjali Ayurveda Ltd. is one of the new entrants in the Ayurvedic and herbal FMCG sector, but has already created waves across the country, giving tough competition to the established multinational corporations. This research highlights the perception of consumers towards Patanjali products. A total of 150 respondents were surveyed to explore various factors influencing consumers' purchase for Patanjali products, and the overall attitude towards strategies implemented by Patanjali Ayurveda. The study findings showed that product quality, brand image, and trust are the most important factors influencing consumers' decision making in selecting Patanjali products. Association of the name of Baba Ramdev is also influencing sales of Patanjali. However, results revealed the average satisfaction from Patanjali products.

Keywords: **Patanjali Ayurveda, FMCG**

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The FMCG industry accounts for the fourth largest sector in India. According to a report by India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF) (2016), the overall FMCG market is expected to increase at a CAGR of 14.7% to touch US$ 110.4 billion during 2012-2020. Food products is the leading segment, accounting for 43% of the overall market ; whereas, personal care segment with 22% and fabric care with 12 % come next in terms of market share. The multinationals have a well established distribution network and low operational cost in the FMCG sector. This sector is volume driven and is characterized by low margins. However, availability of key raw materials, cheaper labor costs, and presence across the entire value chain gives India a competitive advantage.

The broad category of fast moving consumer goods includes herbal products or Ayurvedic medicines. The concept of Ayurvedic medicines, also known as Ayurveda, originated in India more than 3,000 years ago. The term *"Ayurveda"* combines the Sanskrit words *ayur* (life) and *veda* (science or knowledge). It has been identified as an important and traditional health care system of the country. It is also amongst the oldest medical systems of the world. Ayurvedic production in India has been dominated by less than a dozen major companies for decades. The products of these companies are included within the wide-ranging category of fast moving consumer goods, which mainly involves foods, beverages, toiletries, cigarettes, etc. A majority of the large-scale Ayurvedic medicine companies provide products other than Ayurvedic medicines, particularly in the segment of toiletries and foods where there may be some overlap with Ayurveda, for example, including traditional herbal ingredients in the

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composition of toiletries. The main companies in Ayurveda are Dabur, Baidyanath, and Zandu, which together comprise of about 85% of India's domestic market. The majority of the Indian population uses Ayurvedic medicines exclusively or combined with allopathic medicines. The world herbal products market is valued at USD 80 billion, and it is growing at the rate of 7%. It is expected to reach a value of ₹ 700 crores in 2020 and around 6 trillion by 2050. The Indian herbal market is valued at ₹ 425 crores and has exports of herbal & allied herbal products worth ₹ 440 crores (Bhardwaj, 2016).

All major players of FMCG have been hit by low margins of profit : HUL's revenue growth in the past seven quarters has consistently fallen, from 13.2% in the June 2014 to 3.2% at present. ITC's non-cigarette FMCG business has fallen from 11-12 % then to 7% now (Rakshit, 2016). However, Patanjali Ayurved, as the most-recent entrant, has performed tremendously well and has entered in to all possible daily use products. It has not only opened the herbal and Ayurvedic market for personal-care products and foods; it has also set the stage for a fresh battle of brands of giant firms.

Strategic Moves of Patanjali Ayurved Limited

Patanjali Ayurved Limited (PAL), the pharmacy led by yoga guru Baba Ramdev, has been successful in selling a splendid range of food and personal care items across the country. Patanjali Ayurved Ltd. deals with an entire range of FMCG products in nutrition, food, staples, personal care including hair & skin, dental care, and home care that has emerged as a healthy alternative to similar products available in the market. Patanjali Ayurveda Limited is the fastest growing fast moving consumer company in India ("Baba-Ramdev’s Patanjali-fastest growing FMCG in India ; wish it was listed, says CLSA report," 2015). The brand power of the yoga guru has taken this company into the top league with the topline reportedly in excess of leading companies like Jyothy Labs and Emami.

In the financial year 2015, Patanjali Ayurved crossed ₹ 2,000 crore in annual revenues, while the other companies Jyothy Labs and Emami have been far behind in generating revenues and earning profits. The group has 15,000 exclusive Patanjali outlets across India and plans to grow to one lakh outlets in the next few years. It has also started distributing through general retail stores. Patanjali products are sold through three types of medical centres: first, it has Patanjali Chikitsalaya(s), which are clinics along with doctors ; second, Patanjali Arogya Kendra(s) which are health and wellness centers ; and Swadeshi Kendra(s), which are non-medicine outlets. The advantage of Patanjali is lesser price and better results. The Ayurvedic products of Patanjali are mostly available at a discount of 15-30% to compete with the existing brands. In October 2015, the leading retail company Future Group joined hands with Patanjali for a marketing partnership that focuses on raising the acceptance, popularity, and accessibility for healthy Ayurvedic FMCG products amongst millions of Indian consumers. With this, the entire product range of Patanjali products will be available across Big Bazaar and subsequently through its other chains such as KBs, Aadhaar, and Nilgiris in over 245 cities and towns across India ("Baba Ramdev's Patanjali Ayurved joins hand with Future Group," 2015).

Experts say Patanjali's entry into mainstream trade channels, such as modern trade and its growing presence in semi-urban areas, has helped in augmenting the awareness among consumers. Patanjali is also in talks with e-commerce players. Consumer companies typically spend 12-20% of revenue on advertising and promotions. When a new company enters into the business, this spending is significantly higher, however, initially, Patanjali followed a unique word of mouth publicity model and had spent lesser on advertising and sales promotion. However, now, it has a set of television and print advertisements. This is adding to its growing presence within the consumer mind space. As the outcome of its marketing campaign, Patanjali's revenue is expected to touch ₹ 5,000 crore in FY-2016, accounting for more than a fourfold jump in 2 years. Its net profit margin of 15.6% is at present higher than the industry average of 12 - 14% (Dutta, 2016).

After ignoring this segment for so long and responding to Patanjali's success, almost all multinational FMCG companies are now trying to bring in Ayurvedic products in their product mix. HUL, the biggest FMCG company, acquired two Ayurvedic brands named Indulekha and Vayodha with the belief that the brands will help boost the company's portfolio of Ayurvedic products.

In this context, the present research has been conducted to know consumers' attitude towards Patanjali products in various categories with the specific objectives mentioned in the next section.

Review of Literature

Consumer behaviour is important in order to understand the buying tendencies and patterns of consumers' buying. Nagarjan and Sheriff (2013) described the emerging trends in new product launches in the FMCG sector. They opined that the FMCG sector has seen a wide range of innovations in India, and described changing consumer moods and interests. They recommended FMCG companies to change their strategies in creating consumer preferences and interests. They also revealed that industries and markets are shifting their focus from urban to rural settings, are making new strategies, promotional polices, and new pedagogy.

Ali and Yadav (2015) concluded that customers search for value for money and product quality while purchasing herbal products ; in addition, these are preferred as herbal products as these do not have any side effects and are fit for health. Research results of the study by Rekha and Gokila (2015) too revealed that customers are switching to herbal cosmetics as there are no chemicals in these and are free from side effects.

Huda and Sultan (2013) highlighted that a growing number of consumers shifting their purchasing habits from conventional skin-care products to herbal skin-care products as the cause of many conventional skin care companies opening a new branch in their skin care product lines. Rafeeque (2015) identified how different variables influence purchase decisions for cosmetic products. The study revealed that while purchasing cosmetic products, the consumers who are found to be more quality conscious, preferred to purchase Ayurvedic products and despite the impact of other factors, the actual brand decision was taken by the consumers themselves.

According to a study being conducted by McKinsey, word-of-mouth is the primary factor behind 20% to 50% of all purchasing decisions and also generates more than twice the sales of paid advertising. It also influences consumers at every stage of the buying process. Thus, word-of-mouth, though invisible, is a powerful force that dramatically influences consumer decisions. The brand awareness in rural areas is increasing. Of the 20 fastest-growing fast-moving consumer goods companies, the top five posted a 28% growth in value against 18% registered by the bottom five. A Nielsen study *"Delivering Consumer Clarity"* by Justin Sargent (2013) listed the key factors being managed effectively by the top five FMCG companies. It revealed that distribution, volume-price mix, innovation, and employment of modern trade channels differentiate high performers from the rest (as cited in Singh, 2013). As per the study of Bayus (1985), frequent mode of repetitive advertising is subject to increase WOM, especially when there is no data source. Ambiguity in case of advertisement can provoke comment.

King and Tinkhan (1990) specified that consumers can seek WOM in order to reduce the perceived risk when repeated advertising messages generate uncertainty about a product or service. As per the review of literature of the study being conducted by Makandar (2014), most of the management writings find WOM as a tool to draw customers into the 'loyalty ladder'.

Objectives of the Study

- To analyze the perception of consumers towards Patanjali products,
- To identify the purchasing pattern of consumers towards Patanjali products,
- To analyze the relationship between demographic characteristics of the consumers and their preference for Patanjali products.

Methodology

(1) Sampling : A total of 150 respondents from different socio-demographic characteristics were selected for the survey in Delhi. The study was conducted from the month of November 2015 to January 2016. The survey was conducted both online as well as offline. We visited various Patanjali Shops and Department stores and personally administered the questionnaire.

(2) Sources of Data Collection : The data for the study was collected using a self-constructed questionnaire. Survey instrument comprised of questions related to awareness and preference for Patanjali products. A 5-point Likert type scale with classifications from 1 *(strongly disagree)* to 5 *(strongly agree)* was used in order to enable the respondents state their levels of agreement or disagreement to the statements used to gather data for the perception towards Patanjali products.

Data Analysis and Results

In the present study, while collecting data from 150 respondents, the representation has been taken from different population groups. Among 150 respondents, the dominant age group of the respondents was 41-50 years (49.34%) followed by 31-40 years (25.33%), 51 years & above (14%), and 20-30 years (11.33%), respectively. In the study, female representation was 74% as compared to 26% male representation as shown in the Table 1. Out of a total of 150 people who participated in the study, 80.67% representation was of married people and 19.33% was of single people. As far as the working status is concerned, 36.67% of the sample under study consisted of the service group followed by 30.67% housewives and 15.33% self-employed.

In the beginning, an attempt has been made to understand the consumers' perception towards Ayurveda. The Table 2 shows that majority of the respondents, that is, 84.67% believed in Ayurveda for few products and

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Category	Responses	%
Age		
20-30 Years	17	11.33
31-40 Years	38	25.33
41-50 Years	74	49.34
51 Years and above	21	14
Gender		
Male	39	26
Female	111	74
Marital Status		
Married	121	80.67
Single	29	19.33
Work Profile		
College Student	12	8
Service	55	36.67
Self Employed	23	15.33
Housewife	46	30.67
Retired	14	9.33

Table 2. Consumers' Preference for Ayurveda

Believe in Ayurveda		
Response	**Number of Responses**	**%**
Yes, I strongly believe	18	12
For few products	127	84.67
No, I don't believe	5	3.33
Total	**150**	**100%**
Preference for Ayurveda FMCG products		
Response	**Number of Responses**	**%**
Yes, I use it regularly	26	17.33
Sometimes	124	82.67
No, Never	00	00
Total	**150**	**100%**

Table 3. Purchasing Pattern of Patanjali Products

Category	Responses	%
Purchasing of Patanjali Products		
Yes	150	100
No	00	00
Products Purchased of Patanjali		
Nutrition and Supplements (Chyawanprash, Ghee, Honey, health drinks, etc.)	91	60.67
Grocery (Pulses-Dals, Atta, Spices, Besan, Biscuits, etc.)	64	42.67
Home care (Dishwash bar, Agarbatti, etc.)	13	8.67
Personal care (Hair oil, Shampoo, Soap, toothpaste, etc.)	87	58
Health care (Digestives, Wellness and health)	65	43.33
Purchase Frequency		
Only Once (for try)	32	21.33
Twice or Thrice	46	30.67
Frequently	72	48

Table 4. Source of Information

	Number of Responses	%
Advertisement	48	32
Social Media	04	2.67
Friends/ Relatives	59	39.33
Doctor	03	2
On-the-Shelf in Department Stores	36	24
Total	**150**	**100%**

Table 5. Ranking of Ayurveda Brands for FMCG Products

Brands	Ranking			
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Himalaya	68	39	40	3
Dabur	27	34	21	68
Patanjali	24	38	56	32
Biotique	31	39	33	47
Total	**150**	**150**	**150**	**150**

Table 6. Factors Influencing Purchase of Patanjali Products

Attributes	Ranking					
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Product Quality	61	59	30	0	0	0
Brand Image and Trust	48	58	39	5	0	0
Prices	23	19	36	49	23	0
Availability of Products	0	0	8	35	64	43
Brand by Baba Ramdev	18	14	28	2	20	68
Promotion	0	0	9	59	43	39
Total	**150**	**150**	**150**	**150**	**150**	**150**

82.67% were occasional users of FMCG products available under Ayurveda brands.

The Table 3 shows the results of purchasing pattern of respondents for Patanjali products. The respondents were asked about the products purchased of Patanjali brand and purchase frequency. The survey shows that the respondents under the study purchased products of Patanjali under different categories; however, the most purchased were nutrition & supplement products (60.67%) followed by personal-care products (58%). As per the results given in the Table 3, a majority of the respondents (48%) had been purchasing Patanjali products on a regular basis, however, there were around 21% consumers who had purchased the Patanjali products only once for trial.

Responding to the source of information for Patanjali products (Table 4), 59 respondents replied that their first

Table 7. Consumers' Attitude Towards Patanjali Products

S.No.	Statements	Mean
1	Patanjali products are better in quality.	3.65
2	Prices of Patanjali products are reasonable.	4.25
3	Advertisements of Patanjali are informative.	3.85
4	Patanjali products are more effective than other FMCG products available in the market.	3.25
5	Patanjali products are easily available in department stores.	2.75
6	Availability of more variety for daily use products as compared to other Ayurveda brands helps in one stop shopping for personal and home care products.	3.85
7	I prefer Patanjali because it promotes Indian made products.	4.20
8	I prefer patanjali products as it is a brand by Baba Ramdev.	3.30
9	I think Patanjali products are safe as they are made from natural ingredients.	4.35
10	Patanjali products can help maintain good health.	4.50
11	I think Patanjali products should be used only if prescribed by a doctor.	3.10
12	Patanjali products provide sufficient information on labels in order to make informed decisions.	3.75
13	Overall, I prefer Patanjali products.	3.85

Table 8. Customer Satisfaction

S.No.	Product Category	Mean Score
1	Nutrition and Supplements (Chyawanprash, Ghee, Honey, health drinks, etc.)	4.75
2	Grocery (Pulses-Dals, Atta, Spices, Besan, Biscuits, etc.)	4
3	Home care (Dishwash bar, Agarbatti, etc.)	3.25
4	Personal care (Hair oil, Shampoo, Soap, toothpaste, etc.)	3.75
5	Medicines	4.50

purchase was influenced by information provided by friends/ relatives. For 32% of the customers in the survey, advertisements were the main source of awareness, and 24% responded that they checked out Patanjali products while shopping in department stores.

The results in the Table 6 specify that respondents ranked product quality and brand image & trust in Patanjali as the most important attributes influencing their purchase behavior. The price of products is also one of the top three considerations while buying Patanjali products. There were 60 respondents who replied that their first time purchase of Patanjali products was influenced by the fact that Baba Ramdev is associated with the brand. However, availability of products and promotion had the least influence over customers' decision making.

The mean scores of all the statements recording the respondents' perception and preference towards Patanjali products are presented in the Table 7. Among the perceptions, the mean score is highest (4.50) for the statement that Patanjali products help in maintaining good health, and the respondents believed that products offered by Patanjali are safe as they are made from natural ingredients. Customers with a mean score of 4.20 highly agreed with the statement that they preferred Patanjali products as these promote the 'Made in India' concept. As far as the perception towards Patanjali products' quality and effectiveness is concerned, the mean scores of 3.65 and 3.25, respectively show that the respondents considered it to be average. Customers' in the survey gave a mean score rating of 3.85 and 3.75 to the promotional aspects like advertisements and labeling. Overall preference for Patanjali products by the respondents has been rated as 3.85, thereby indicating average to high preference.

The customers were asked to rate their satisfaction from different categories of Patanjali products, and their

Table 9. Relationship Between Demographic Characteristics and Overall Preference for Patanjali Products

Dimension	Age		Gender		Marital Status		Work Profile	
	χ^2	Sig.	χ^2	Sig.	χ^2	Sig.	χ^2	Sig.
Overall Preference for Patanjali Products	9.466	0.046*	0.934	0.334	0.880	0.348	8.637	0.050*

Note: * means significant at the 5% Level of Significance

responses are presented in the Table 8. It can be inferred that the mean score is highest (4.75) for the satisfaction with nutrition and supplement products followed by medicines (4.50) from Patanjali.

There were different groups involved in the survey, and in order to see whether the overall preference of consumers towards Patanjali products was identical for all groups involved in this survey, the Kruskal-Wallis test was performed. The test was used to measure any significant differences in responses among different consumer groups on the basis of their demographic profile. The consumers were differentiated on the basis of age groups, gender, marital status, and profession of consumers.

With a chi-square value of 9.466 and significant value of 0.046 (Table 9), it can be inferred that the different age groups' overall preference for Patanjali Products is significant. Respondents from different work profiles including home makers, retired people, service class, self-employed, and students participated in the survey. On the basis of the Kruskal - Wallis test (χ^2 = 8.637, p = 0.050), it can be concluded that respondents across various working profiles have a significant difference with regard to their preference towards Patanjali products. However, the chi-square values of 0.934 and 0.880 at the 5% level of significance show that there is no relationship between the overall preference for Patanjali products and the consumers' gender and marital status, respectively.

Discussion and Conclusion

Patanjali Ayurveda Ltd. started out as a small pharmacy with its own exclusive outlets in selected areas and has expanded to sell a full range of consumer categories, from skin, oral & hair care products, biscuits, edible oils to fruit juices, and groceries. With the advent of Patanjali, there is greater awareness today about herbal and Ayurvedic concepts and thus greater consumption of products in this segment. Keeping this in view, the present research has made an attempt to understand consumers' perception towards Patanjali products.

The research study (Table 3) shows that more than 50% of the respondents were regular users of Patanjali products, thereby indicating that the acceptability of Patanjali products has increased enormously over the past. Consumers believe in recommendations from friends and relatives over all forms of advertising, and this truly applies to Patanjali products. As can be inferred from the results depicted in Table 4, for around 40% of the respondents, the source of information was friends/ relatives. In addition, it was also found that people do not believe that Patanjali products should be used only if prescribed by a doctor (mean rating = 3.10, Table 7). Both these findings are in line with the findings of the research conducted by Samojlik, Mijatović, Gavarić, Krstin, and Božin (2013) that people consume herbal remedies on their own initiative or on recommendation of non-medically educated people, without previous consultation with a medical doctor or pharmacist.

As per the results shown in the Table 7, the respondents strongly thought that Patanjali products are safe as they are made from natural ingredients and help in maintaining good health, which is consistent with the results of a study by Khanna (2015), which found that people were satisfied with Patanjali products as they have an ability to cure problems. Therefore, it can be concluded that the consumers' minds are changing, and they are moving towards natural herbal products as they feel these have fewer side effects as compared to products from chemical/ artificial origins.

Baba Ramdev has been successful in establishing a lasting poignant relationship with his customers, and all his followers are passionate about him and fanatically follow him (Pandey, 2009) and Patanjali Yogpeeth, riding on the brand image of Baba Ramdev, has launched several products not only based on Ayurvedic medicines but also on FMCGs. The availability of products across all categories like personal care, home care, health supplements, and groceries in the herbal/ Ayurvedic segment has added to the advantage of Patanjali as respondents in the survey (Table 7) agreed that it gives them wider option of products from the same brand at one location.

One of the unique promotional aspects of Patanjali Ayurvedic Ltd. is "Swadeshi Apnao" which has connected with the people very well, and in fact, the consumers in the survey (as per the results given in the Table 7) also revealed that the preference of people for Patanjali is led by the fact that it promotes Indian made products. According to the results included in the Table 6, the most important attribute for consumers while purchasing is the quality of the products. Although the satisfaction level of respondents from nutrition & supplements and medicines offered by Patanjali is quite high, the satisfaction from other categories likes personal care and home care is quite average as per the results shown in the Table 8.

Looking at the success of Patanjali within a short time, on the one hand, there are a number of other players who are planning to enter into the segment, and on the other hand, the existing players in the Ayurvedic segment have also accelerated their efforts in the marketing of their products.

Managerial Implications

The research indicated that product quality followed by brand image and trust are the most important factors influencing consumers while purchasing Patanjali products. Although Patanjali is advertising its products harping on quality and purity, but as the demand increases, it will be a challenge for them to maintain consistency in their quality.

The Patanjali products are priced lower than those of other brands both in the herbal and non-herbal categories and have been able to influence price- sensitive consumers. Relatively lower prices is helping Patanjali gain market share, but with the entry of other players in the herbal segment, consumers will prefer products which will match quality with price. Different age groups as well as the respondents from different work profiles had different perceptions towards Patanjali products as per the results of the survey (Table 9). So, it becomes important for Patanjali to launch products catering to different age categories and more importantly, to create more customer base of youth by bringing in new innovative products of their interest.

Unlike most of the already established MNCs and Indian brands in the herbal as well non-herbal FMCG category, Patanjali's source integrity has entered into consumers' hearts and minds as it relates to Baba Ramdev, who has garnered great image for physical well-being through his yoga teachings. In the present study, there were few customers who preferred Patanjali because of its association with Baba Ramdev. Patanjali has opted for multiple distribution channels ranging from its own exclusive outlets to modern and traditional retail stores, but it still has to work on reaching kirana stores in small localities to make sure that the product reaches mass consumers.

Customers have increasing demand of herbal/ Ayurvedic products across different income categories owing to growing alertness regarding harmful effects of the chemicals added to the personal care products. Patanjali and other players in the ayurvedic segment should focus more towards creating awareness among consumers regarding the benefits of using products with natural ingredients.

The Ayurvedic and herbal product market is still at a very nascent stage in India, and with existing companies battling it out to increase their market share, and a number of other companies planning to venture in the segment coupled with increased awareness among consumers towards these products, the Ayurvedic and herbal product market is definitely going to expand at a great pace.

Limitations of the Study and Scope for Further Research

The results of the study may not be generalized as the research was conducted for a single region. Since Patanjali products are consumed nationally, it would be appropriate and relevant to replicate the study using national samples. Additionally, the stores and respondents were selected through convenient sampling method. The bias cannot be excluded since we only reached out to an accessible area to collect the data. Time and resource constraints are other limitations of the study. The study provides insights into the brand as well as buying perceptions amongst different demographics of Patanjali users. The issue this study could not accurately address is the perception of non - users of Patanjali products. A study to analyze the consumer perception and satisfaction from all of its products in different categories like personal care, home care, grocery can be useful. In addition, a comparative study can be conducted (both primary and secondary) between Patanjali products and its main competitors in each category.

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