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Marketing Strategies of Ayurvedic Companies in India: A Comparative Study of Traditional and Digital Marketing Approaches

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Abstract: The Indian Ayurvedic industry has witnessed significant growth due to increasing consumer awareness of natural healthcare, government support, and rapid digital transformation. This study examines the marketing strategies adopted by leading Ayurvedic companies in India through a descriptive analysis of secondary data. The study compares traditional marketing approaches, including heritage branding, television advertising, print media, and retail distribution, with digital strategies such as social media marketing, content marketing, influencer collaborations, search engine optimization, and e-commerce. The findings indicate that successful Ayurvedic companies integrate traditional and digital marketing to enhance brand awareness, consumer trust, customer engagement, and competitive advantage. The study provides valuable insights for marketers, researchers, and policymakers while highlighting opportunities for future research on marketing effectiveness and consumer behaviour in the Ayurvedic industry.

Keywords: Ayurvedic marketing, traditional marketing, digital marketing, consumer trust, brand strategy, India, healthcare marketing.

Introduction

In the last decade, the Indian Ayurvedic industry has seen tremendous growth, as consumers are becoming more health-conscious and preferring natural and holistic health care solutions. One of the world's oldest medical systems, Ayurveda has grown from a traditional healthcare practice to a part and parcel of the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), personal care, nutraceutical and wellness industries in India. As more and more consumers are turning to herbal and natural products, Ayurvedic companies are turning to creative marketing strategies that combine traditional marketing methods with contemporary digital marketing techniques. As a result, companies like Dabur, Patanjali Ayurved, Himalaya Wellness, Baidyanath, Kapiva, and Forest Essentials have revolutionized the competitive market by making Ayurveda a scientifically sound and lifestyle-driven answer to today's consumers. Several macro-economic and socio-cultural factors have contributed to the growth of the Ayurvedic market. The

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growing disposable income, urbanization, awareness of the harmful effects of synthetic chemicals and the growing trend of preventive healthcare have greatly increased the consumer base for Ayurvedic products. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has driven consumer interest in immunity-boosting and natural health care products, presenting unprecedented opportunities for Ayurvedic brands. In response, companies quickly expanded their online footprint, created online campaigns, enhanced ecommerce channels, and utilized influencer marketing to spread the word about the health benefits of Ayurvedic products. In the past, Ayurvedic businesses used to heavily depend on traditional marketing methods like TV ads, newspaper ads, doctor recommendations, retail distribution, educational seminars, and word-of-mouth marketing. Such methods proved to be very effective as Ayurveda is linked with trust, credibility and cultural heritage. Older brands like Dabur and Baidyanath developed their brand image by maintaining product quality, having a wide distribution network and educating the masses on the scientific and historical basis of Ayurvedic medicine. These strategies created long-term customer connections and increased brand trust over several generations of customers. But with the rapid digital transformation, the purchasing behavior of consumers has changed fundamentally. Today's consumers are more likely to find product information online via search engines, social media, online reviews, YouTube videos, and influencer recommendations before buying. Digital marketing allows Ayurvedic businesses to engage directly with customers, tailor their messaging, foster online communities, and gather valuable customer data via analytics. Social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and e-commerce platforms have emerged as vital channels for the promotion of Ayurvedic products, educating consumers, and fostering brand engagement. As a result, digital marketing has become a strategic addition to traditional marketing methods. The Ayurvedic industry has also undergone a significant transformation in terms of competition. Established companies that have been around for years are now facing competition from digitally native direct-to-consumer (D2C) brands that are heavily dependent on social media marketing, influencer partnerships, content marketing, and customised customer experiences. As brands mature, they are able to build on their brand heritage and distribution channels, while new brands are prioritizing authenticity, transparency, sustainability, and digital engagement to stand out in increasingly crowded markets. This blending of traditional and digital marketing offers a valuable backdrop to understanding the ways in which various companies are communicating value to consumers and how they are gaining competitive edge. Although the Ayurvedic industry is growing rapidly, the research work has been mainly focused on consumer behaviour, purchase intention, adoption of herbal products and health related outcomes, but not on the systematic study of marketing strategies used by the Ayurvedic companies. Previous research tends to focus on consumer awareness, factors that influence purchase decisions, or perceptions of herbal products, with comparatively little research focusing on how firms combine traditional and digital marketing to create competitive advantage. This is a significant research gap as marketing strategies have a significant impact on brand awareness, consumer trust, customer engagement, and long-term organizational performance. The present

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study aims to fill this gap by carrying out a descriptive comparative analysis of the marketing strategies used by the top Ayurvedic companies in India. The study does not just look at consumer responses, but also at how organizations use the different components of the marketing mix to enhance their market presence: product positioning, pricing, promotion, distribution, branding, digital communication, influencer marketing and customer engagement. The contrast between the traditional marketing methods and the new digital marketing strategies gives an idea about the changing nature of Ayurvedic marketing in the changing business scenario of India.

Specifically, the objectives of this study are:

- To examine the traditional marketing strategies adopted by leading Ayurvedic companies in India.
- To analyze the digital marketing approaches implemented by Ayurvedic companies.
- To compare traditional and digital marketing strategies in terms of their strategic objectives and customer engagement.
- To identify emerging trends shaping the future of marketing in the Indian Ayurvedic industry.

The results of this study will be useful for the marketing literature as it will give a complete picture of strategic marketing practices in the Ayurvedic industry. Moreover, the study provides practical implications for managers, entrepreneurs, policymakers and researchers who are interested in creating effective marketing strategies that can balance the rich Ayurvedic heritage of India with the rapidly changing digital technologies.

Literature Review

Marketing has shifted from a product selling approach to a value creation, relationship development, and competitive advantage approach (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Marketing is even more important in the healthcare and wellness sector because consumers consider not only the functional attributes of a product, but also its perceived safety, trust, credibility and long-term health benefits. In the Ayurvedic industry, the challenge lies in balancing the need to maintain the authenticity of traditional Indian medicine with the evolving expectations of consumers in the era of digital transformation. With the growing awareness of consumers about preventive healthcare, natural ingredients, and sustainable living, the marketing strategies of Ayurvedic companies have evolved from traditional promotional methods to a more comprehensive approach that integrates traditional communication channels with digital platforms to improve customer engagement and competitiveness in the market (Behare et al., 2018; Singh et al., 2023). In the last decade, the Indian Ayurvedic industry has undergone a significant transformation, making it a more competitive landscape. In the past, Ayurvedic products were sold mostly by physicians, local pharmacies, specialized Ayurvedic stores, and through word of mouth. But with the rise in urbanization, rise in disposable income, health awareness and supportive government policies, the consumer base of Ayurvedic products has grown in various segments. The formation of Ministry of AYUSH further enhanced the institutional framework of the industry by fostering research, quality assurance, education and awareness of Ayurveda in the world. Thus, Ayurveda has transformed from a traditional healthcare system to a significant commercial industry in the

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fields of pharmaceuticals, nutraceuticals, cosmetics, personal care products, and wellness services (Ministry of AYUSH, 2023). There is also some recent industry evidence that although there has been a growth in consumer uptake of herbal products, companies are still struggling to increase the penetration of Ayurveda in the very competitive FMCG market in India, thus making strategic marketing more important than ever. Traditional marketing is still considered to be a key factor in the success of established Ayurvedic companies, according to previous research. Traditional marketing methods like TV ads, newspapers, magazines, outdoor ads, retail merchandising, exhibitions, product demonstrations, physician recommendations, and educational awareness-building are still effective because they build brand credibility and consumer confidence. Companies such as Dabur, Himalaya Wellness, and Baidyanath have established their market presence over a long period of time by having a wide distribution network, a strong heritage brand, a consistent product quality, and a strong educational promotion of the scientific and cultural basis of Ayurveda. In healthcare-related markets, authenticity, historical legacy, and consumer confidence are key factors influencing purchasing decisions, making heritage branding a valuable tool for companies to stand out (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Singh et al., 2023). Digital technologies have revolutionized the way Ayurvedic businesses communicate with their customers. Digital marketing allows companies to engage directly with customers via websites, social media, search engines, email marketing, influencers, mobile apps, and e-commerce platforms. Unlike conventional advertising, digital marketing enables two-way communication, enabling businesses to tailor their marketing messages, receive instant feedback from customers, understand consumer preferences, and continually refine marketing strategies based on analytics. Behare et al. (2018) state that social media marketing is one of the most cost-effective marketing strategies for Ayurvedic companies as it helps to build brand awareness and promotes consumer engagement by providing educational content, testimonials, wellness campaigns, and interactive communication. Likewise, recent research has found that digital marketing has a positive impact on consumer awareness, trust, purchase intention, and perceived effectiveness of Ayurvedic and herbal products, especially among younger and technologically savvy consumers. Content marketing is another crucial part of digital strategy in the Ayurvedic industry. Instead of just promotional ads, companies are now developing informative blogs, health articles, educational videos, webinars, podcasts and expert interviews that explain Ayurvedic principles, preventive healthcare practices, immunity enhancement and healthy lifestyles. This type of education not only helps consumers learn more about health care, but also helps establish the credibility of the companies as sources of health care information. Online visibility and traffic to the website are also enhanced through search engine optimization (SEO), search engine marketing (SEM), and content-based digital communication, which helps with customer acquisition and retention. In addition, the use of healthcare professionals, nutritionists, yoga practitioners, fitness experts, and wellness bloggers as influencers has proven to be an effective way to boost consumer confidence, as recommendations from trusted opinion leaders are seen as more

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genuine than traditional ads. Conceptual research in recent years also confirms that the combination of green marketing, educational communication and digital engagement enhances brand differentiation and long-term consumer relationships in the Ayurvedic sector. The literature is unanimous that consumer trust is one of the most important factors affecting consumer purchase behavior in the Ayurvedic market. Morgan and Hunt (1994) argued that trust and commitment are the key elements of relationship marketing and Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) showed that brand trust has a significant effect on purchase intention and customer loyalty. These theoretical approaches are especially relevant to Ayurvedic products because consumers often equate herbal medicines with health, safety, prevention and natural healing. Therefore, marketing tactics that convey transparency, ingredient authenticity, scientific validation, ethical sourcing, and product quality are more likely to build consumer trust and drive repeat purchases. Recent studies have also shown that educational marketing, clear communication, sustainability efforts, and evidence-based promotional strategies significantly enhance public acceptance of Ayurvedic products. While the literature has significantly contributed to the understanding of consumer awareness, purchase intention, herbal product adoption, social media marketing and digital consumer behaviour, there is relatively limited research that has systematically compared the overall marketing strategies adopted by the leading Ayurvedic companies in India. Previous studies have focused on specific marketing functions, including digital promotion, advertising effectiveness, or consumer perception, but have not offered a comprehensive comparison of traditional and digital marketing strategies. Moreover, there are relatively few studies that examine how well established companies integrate heritage branding, retail distribution, physician recommendations, television advertising, influencer marketing, social media engagement, e-commerce, and content marketing to generate sustainable competitive advantage. This is crucial because today's marketing success is more about combining traditional credibility with digital innovation than just one or the other. Hence, the present study aims to give a detailed description of the marketing strategies used by the top Ayurvedic companies in India and a comparative analysis of the marketing strategies adopted by them, so as to gain an understanding of how traditional marketing strategies and digital marketing strategies complement each other in building brand awareness, consumer trust, customer engagement and competitive positioning.

Methodology

The present study uses descriptive research design which is purely secondary data based to analyse and compare the marketing strategies used by the top Ayurvedic companies in India. A descriptive approach is suitable when the main purpose of the study is to systematically analyze the current marketing practices, and not to test hypotheses or establish causal relationships. Descriptive research allows researchers to combine information from several credible sources, to look for patterns, to make comparisons of organizational practices, and to give a complete picture of a specific phenomenon (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The Indian Ayurvedic industry has undergone significant changes in response to the changing preferences of consumers and the

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advancements in digital technology, making a descriptive review an appropriate approach to assessing the evolution of marketing strategies used by companies in this sector. Only secondary data obtained from authentic and public sources were used in the study. Theoretical developments in marketing strategy and consumer behaviour in the Ayurvedic industry were understood by collecting information from peer-reviewed journal articles from Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, and other academic databases. Further, the annual reports, sustainability reports, official company websites, investor presentations, corporate blogs, press releases, advertising campaigns, publications of the Ministry of AYUSH, industry reports published by consulting organizations and credible business newspapers were studied to get the latest information about the marketing initiatives taken by the major Ayurvedic companies. The methodological triangulation from these multiple sources enhanced the credibility and comprehensiveness of the analysis (Bowen, 2009). The study is based on six major companies of Ayurveda in India namely Dabur India Limited, Patanjali Ayurved Limited, Himalaya Wellness Company, Baidyanath, Kapiva and Forest Essentials. The organizations were chosen using purposive sampling as they are different business models in the Ayurvedic industry. Dabur, Himalaya and Baidyanath are established brands with wide retail distribution and a long history of branding, whereas Patanjali has revolutionized the competitive landscape with its nationalism-based branding and mass-market pricing. On the other hand, Kapiva and Forest Essentials are digitally savvy high-end brands that heavily leverage e-commerce, content marketing, influencers and direct-to-consumer marketing. The presence of companies with different organizational characteristics gives a balanced comparative view of the use of traditional and digital marketing strategies. The information gathered was classified along the main dimensions of marketing strategy for systematic comparison. The dimensions were product strategy, pricing strategy, distribution strategy, promotional strategy, branding strategy, digital marketing practices, customer engagement initiatives, sustainability communication, and integrated marketing communication. The marketing mix framework of Kotler and Keller (2016), the theory of relationship marketing by Morgan and Hunt (1994), and the latest digital marketing literature that focuses on customer engagement, personalization, and value creation were used to guide the comparative analysis. Thematic analysis was used to find similarities and differences between companies, allowing the researcher to identify common patterns in the strategies, not just describe individual organizational practices. Wherever possible, information from one source was cross-checked with multiple independent sources to increase the reliability of the study. Before being included in the analysis, company statements on marketing campaigns, product positioning, sustainability efforts, and digital engagement were compared with industry reports, academic publications, and publicly available business information. This process minimized the risk of bias from using only organizational publications. However, the study recognizes that secondary data have limitations such as differences in publication dates, availability of information, and organizational disclosure. Even with these constraints, the information from several credible sources is adequate to draw meaningful

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conclusions about the marketing strategies used by Ayurvedic companies in India.

Discussion

The comparative analysis shows that the marketing success of the Ayurvedic companies in India is mainly due to their integration of traditional marketing concepts with the modern digital communication approach. Instead of replacing traditional marketing strategies, top brands have embraced integrated marketing strategies that maintain cultural authenticity of Ayurveda and meet the changing expectations of consumers in a rapidly digitalizing market. This discovery aligns with Kotler and Keller's (2016) suggestion that in today's world, marketing is about building value through a coordinated communication across various customer touchpoints rather than through individual promotional efforts. The most important finding from the review is the continued relevance of heritage branding in the Ayurvedic industry. Companies like Dabur, Himalaya Wellness, and Baidyanath have always highlighted their history, research, product quality, and commitment to true Ayurvedic principles in their marketing messages. These entities build on years of consumer confidence by emphasizing scientific validation, traditional formulations, and quality certifications, which further strengthen consumer trust in their reliability and effectiveness. These branding strategies help to build consumer confidence since buying decisions for healthcare products are relatively high in perceived risk than those of regular consumer goods. The results thus confirm the relationship marketing theory that states that trust and commitment are key factors in the development of long-term customer relationships (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). The review also highlights the fact that digital marketing has become an essential strategic tool in the Ayurvedic sector. Social media platforms, search engine optimization, influencer partnerships, educational content, mobile apps, and e-commerce marketplaces are all becoming popular tools for companies to connect directly with consumers. Digital platforms enable ongoing interaction, such as comments, customer reviews, personalized recommendations, and real-time communication, which enhances customer engagement and organizational responsiveness, unlike traditional media. Digital communication has become a key source of information, health education and brand discovery for younger consumers in particular. This means that companies that are investing in content marketing and digital customer engagement seem to be more likely to target technologically engaged customer segments. The other significant discovery relates to the increasing importance of educational marketing. While product promotion is still a key part of the business, the successful Ayurvedic companies are increasingly educating their consumers about the science of Ayurveda, healthy lifestyle, nutrition, immunity and preventive healthcare. Consumer awareness is increased through educational blogs, expert interviews, webinars, social media campaigns and informational videos, while also building organizational credibility. This approach is a departure from traditional advertising tactics that focus on persuading customers to make a purchase to a more value-driven communication approach that aims to build a relationship with customers that is informed and lasting. This is in line with the modern concept of relationship marketing which focuses on customer value creation and knowledge sharing. The comparative review also shows significant differences in marketing strategies

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between organisations based on their target market and business model. Older companies with established distribution channels in the physical world still spend significant resources on TV advertising, print, pharmacy distribution and retail merchandising to ensure wide market reach. On the other hand, digitally native brands like Kapiva and Forest Essentials focus on premium positioning, personalized communication, influencers, subscription models and direct-to-consumer sales via digital channels. While the strategies are different in their operation, they both aim at the same goal: to increase brand differentiation and customer loyalty in a more competitive market. Pricing and distribution strategies are also important factors in marketing effectiveness. Mass-market brands tend to focus on low cost, availability in many stores and broad geographic reach to achieve maximum market penetration. Premium brands, on the other hand, use product exclusivity, better packaging, luxury positioning and selective distribution to establish perceptions of higher quality and authenticity. The variety of these shows that there is no single marketing strategy that can be applied to all businesses and all target markets, and that marketing strategies are dependent on the position of the organisation, the target market segments and the overall objectives of the business. The review further highlights the increasing importance of sustainability and transparency in shaping consumer perceptions. Today's consumers are increasingly mindful of where ingredients are sourced, how they are produced, whether they are recyclable, how they are produced without harming animals, and the ethical practices of businesses. As a result, companies are increasingly integrating sustainability communication into their marketing strategies to strengthen their authenticity and corporate responsibility. Clear information about the quality of ingredients, manufacturing processes, certifications, and scientific studies also builds brand confidence and helps eliminate consumer confusion, especially in the healthcare sector. In conclusion, the evidence suggests that competitive advantage in the Indian Ayurvedic industry is no longer solely based on product quality or traditional reputation. Rather, the key to sustainable success is the capacity of an organization to combine heritage branding, scientific credibility, customer education, digital engagement, sustainability initiatives and omnichannel distribution into a unified marketing strategy. Organizations that can harmonize the ancient principles of Ayurveda with the modern possibilities of digital marketing are better positioned to build consumer confidence, enhance customer interaction, and gain a competitive advantage in the long run. The results of this study add to the existing marketing literature by providing evidence that the future of Ayurvedic marketing is not about the dichotomy of traditional marketing and digital marketing, but about the strategic combination of both to deliver better customer value and better organizational performance.

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Table 1: *Comparative Analysis of Marketing Strategies Adopted by Leading Ayurvedic Companies in India*

Company	Traditional Marketing Strategies	Digital Marketing Strategies	Key Competitive Advantage
Dabur India Ltd.	Television advertising, print media, strong retail distribution, pharmacy networks	Social media campaigns, e-commerce partnerships, SEO, content marketing	Heritage branding with extensive distribution network
Patanjali Ayurved Ltd.	Television advertisements, word-of-mouth, exclusive retail stores, mass pricing	YouTube promotions, social media engagement, online marketplaces	Nationalistic branding and affordable pricing strategy
Himalaya Wellness	Medical representatives, physician recommendations, retail pharmacies, educational campaigns	Social media marketing, wellness blogs, mobile applications, e-commerce	Scientific credibility combined with herbal expertise
Baidyanath	Heritage branding, traditional retail channels, Ayurvedic practitioners	Official website, social media presence, online retail platforms	Long-standing consumer trust and authentic Ayurvedic formulations
Kapiva	Limited offline retail, premium product positioning	Influencer marketing, Instagram campaigns, content marketing, D2C website, e-commerce	Digital-first strategy targeting health-conscious millennials
Forest Essentials	Premium retail stores, luxury branding, experiential retail	Influencer collaborations, Instagram marketing, online luxury retail, personalized digital campaigns	Premium Ayurvedic positioning with luxury customer experience

Source: *Compiled by the author from company annual reports, official websites, Ministry of AYUSH publications, and relevant literature (2023–2025).*

Conclusion

This study explored the marketing strategies used by top Ayurvedic companies in India using descriptive analysis of secondary data, with a particular emphasis on the combination of traditional and digital marketing strategies. The results show that the Ayurvedic industry has been growing at a fast pace, not just because of the growing demand for natural and herbal products, but also due to the use of innovative marketing strategies. Traditional marketing methods like TV advertising, print media, heritage branding, wide distribution channels and physician recommendations are still effective in building brand credibility and consumer trust, but digital marketing is also proving to be a valuable asset for reaching more markets, engaging customers and building brand loyalty. The study shows that the successful Ayurvedic companies have been able to blend their culture with contemporary marketing technologies to develop integrated marketing communication strategies. While established brands like Dabur,

Himalaya Wellness, and Baidyanath are still capitalizing on their legacy and reputation, newer brands like Kapiva and Forest Essentials are focusing on social media marketing, influencer partnerships, e-commerce channels, and content marketing to reach digitally savvy consumers. Whether they are using marketing or not, all businesses understand the value of authenticity, transparency, customer education and quality assurance in establishing long-term relationships with customers. The study adds to the existing marketing literature by giving a comparative understanding of the role of traditional marketing and digital marketing in the Indian Ayurvedic industry. It emphasizes the need for an organization to combine traditional promotional strategies with new digital tools and maintain the principles of Ayurveda. The study is secondary data based but it gives useful information to the marketers, policy makers and researchers. Primary data and quantitative methods could be used in future research to explore how specific marketing strategies affect consumer trust, purchase intention, brand loyalty, and organizational performance in various demographic and international markets.

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