

An Empirical Study of Consumers Purchase Intention Toward Dietary Supplements.

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ABSTRACT

The food supplements industry, as well as, the wellness trend is undergoing a tremendous growth. In case you are seeking to sell in such space or make policy likewise direction, it is relevant to possess a feel of what actually sparks the buys. In practice, it is crucial. We were not keen on being confined to such general beliefs and ways that we could have known what is a major role, the demographic factors like age and gender, the facility of the real purchase of the product and effect of the own state of health. A survey that was well structured gathered information on 143 individuals and the information was analyzed using SPSS. The analytical methods were ANOVA, reliability test, descriptive statistics, independent samples t-tests and multivariate regression analysis. This is more or less the complete tract of such buying behavior study of analysis. A single dominant pattern emerged which was that the first age was not a simple variable, but the most predictive of whether an individual would intend to buy supplements. The gender was also originating to be important and this confirms that marketing is not about a one size fits all strategy. This is a fine point but pre-existing medical conditions had it that the former would be more reliant on the advice of a doctor in making the purchase as expected. Notably, they did not demonstrate a greater purchase intention much higher than no conditions. This means that the presence of a condition renders the buying process to be more cautious and advice based process as opposed to being an eagerness based process. The majority of the cases depended on the fact that a single largest predictor was accessibility. Non price, but just first, non-brand. How convenient will it be to me to find and get this product? This fact leads to logistics and distribution.

Keywords: Dietary supplements, Purchase intention, Consumer behavior, Health awareness, availability.

INTRODUCTION

The world has observed the growth in the rate of in rise in dietary supplements business because of the changing trend in health sensitivity, lifestyle and also the increasing emphasis on preventative healthcare. People use dietary supplements to increase the standard of their lives to optimize the functioning of their immune system and remedy the lack of vitamins/minerals (Bellows et al., 2013; Zhang et al., 2020). The dietary supplements market in the whole world is expanding at a high rate attributable to multiple factors that include urbanization, the increase of sedentary ways of living around the globe, and the prevalence of individuals with various forms of lifestyle diseases (Report Linker, n.d.; MarketsandMarkets, 2024). The emergent India economy has seen an upsurge in dietary supplement intake of supposedly due to the disposable income, awareness to health and an increased variety of channel through online and off-line selling hubs (Euro monitor International, 2023).

Expanding food supplements have been found to be inflexible competitors on a continuum, in the light of the different levels of needs of the consumers. The buyer behavior is not something that is simply associated with a consumer, such as it provides general information, on how the consumers view the health benefits of the supplements, how it applies to their age and their personal need. On the same note, the education level, the income level, and the real health status, among others, have an enormous influence on the purchasing behavior (Murphy et al., 2007; Malik and Tendon, 2024). Other than these demographics and personal factors, other aspects are taken into account by the consumers. The perceived safety determines the eventual decision made by the customer based on the faith of the customer towards a company and comparison with other companies. A more accurate insight into the cause of consumer behavior can enable marketers or health policy makers to develop a more

rational product and regulatory policies that is more appropriate to the needs of the population (Gupta and Singh, 2021; Zoupos and Spais, 2022).

The decision to consume dietary supplements may be explained also with the help of the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991). The ease with which a person consumes the supplements is a significant aspect that would determine the intention to buy supplements. Three components that are inter-related affect this intention to purchase supplements or behaviour. These three aspects are his own feelings concerning the use of supplements, perceived social pressure. Lastly, the third component is the self-efficacy of a single person or his capability to manage the purchase behaviour of himself. Integrations of psychological drivers will indicate or influence the adopting behaviour and consumption of health related products. The risk-benefit evaluation of a person in terms of purchasing supplements is also alternative aspect that shapes the attitude towards the supplement (Rana and Paul, 2020), and beliefs about the advantage of preventive health practices. The same thought processes relate to facets of the Health Belief Model, in particular the amount to which a individual trusts that they are likely to experience health problems and the degree to which they believe that it is vital to reduce their exposure.

The purchase intention of dietary supplements may be regarded as outcome or correlated outcome of different influences and features that may be viewed as intertwined. The effect of population attributes determines degree of awareness towards and purchase of dietary supplements, as well, the characteristics of a dietary supplement (i.e., the price, the presence of any regulatory approval, availability) can also influence the perceived value and trustworthiness of the consumer (Bellows et al., 2013; Zoupos & Spais, 2022). Health awareness and health conditions also determine the effect of dietary supplements consumption on a particular person. It creates a detachment between prevention and treatment users who take supplements (Zhang et al., 2020). The above discussed correlations of the above mentioned groups imply that an integrated empirical investigation should be conducted to establish the demographic, economic as well as the health associated variables that are responsible of influencing intake of dietary supplements.

The dietary supplements represent a study that has increased in percentages, not only in the literature, but also, regarding the amount of surveys conducted on the topic. Nonetheless, the huge amount of studies examines a single factor that predisposes a group of individuals to the purchasing decision of dietary supplements (e.g., the increased awareness of dietary supplements, health worth, marketing ethics). In addition, no empirical survey is conducted the area, captivating into reason the effects of different demographic factors (e.g., age, gender, education level), price sensitivity, perceived health safety of dietary supplements, Access to health care and medical conditions on the intentions of consumers to buy dietary supplements in the prism of management (business) and the consumer behavior (Malik and Tandon, 2024). As a way of filling this knowledge gap, the proposed research undertaking will be shown to help analyze the many influences that inform an urge of consuming dietary supplements based on quantitative research design. The demographic study of the variables constituting the main dimensions of making purchases and health status should enable marketers and industry participants and policymakers to have the awareness about their customers. It is probable that our survey will be published and become a part to add to the study on the topic of dietary supplement usage and evidencebased managerial decision-making within the health and wellness markets that have grown at an unbelievable pace.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Dietary supplements have increasingly received a lot of scrutinizing interest due to their association with consumer Behaviours and Health Management, Marketing and other pertinent fields of Research. Previous research indicates that an ever-growing group of Consumers perceive the Dietary Supplements as Medical (Nutritional) product with the added benefit of a Lifestyle/Wellness product based on the Personal Preference, Socio-Demographics and marketing of the Consumers (Bellows et al., 2013; Zoupos & Spais 20202).

Demographics and intent to purchase

The demographic variables will be expressed in footings of numbers which describe the things of dietary supplements on the purchase intentions of the individuals. These issues are age, sex, level of education, marital

status, and income just to mention a few. It has been observed that dietary supplements are more frequently taken by older people as related to the young ones. This will be more practised by individuals who are more health-conscious and want a healthy life. The proportion of women who consume dietary supplements is lower than that of men perhaps due to their health conscious nature. The education level also contributes to the increase of people which use these supplements as individuals know well what they need in positions of nutrient levels and are more expected to trust the information that is presented on the product. The sum that individuals earn is also varied. The Malik and Tandon (2024) hold that the highly-income earners will be given a choice to purchase dietary supplements just because they have the money. They also have more facts on the health threat they are showing to hence make better shopping results. The outcomes reveal that demographical issues are good predictors of diet supplement buying behavior. Hence, a research study, which would understand or replicate the usage of dietary supplements, is necessary.

Price Sensitivity and the Decision-making among the Consumers

The population of the developing countries would be more price-sensitive, so it is the crucial aspect in their buying choices. In reference to dietary supplements, it implies that the relationships between price and the worth consumers trust they are getting in their money are negative. This is more so in case of individuals with lower disposable incomes since they have to govern whether apparent health aids of regular use are worth the cost. Competitively priced supplements will also be preferred by such consumers. Price sensitivity influences the initial purchase as well as the long time purchase and consumption of dietary supplements.

Perceived Safety, Quality and Certification

Consumer trust and purchase intention is a major driver of consumer behavior; therefore, perceived safety and quality of products can be viewed as primary remarkable conditions that make people trust a brand of diet supplement and buy it. The authors of the article Impact of Ingredients Composition, Accuracy in the dosage and side effects on consumer's acceptance to use dietary supplements (Bellows et al, 2013: 122-148). The study by Zhang et al., 2020, indicates that the credibility of the consumers with the regulatory authorities will contribute to the acceptance of the Vitamin and Mineral Supplements by consumer; therefore, the degree of knowledge that the consumer has regarding the certification and approval of the regulatory authority will be significant predictors in consumer of the dietary supplements.

Accessibility

Derived from access controllability and access barriers. Strong forces that influence consumer intake of dietary supplements are ease of use and availability to the consumer. With pharmacies, supermarkets, and ecremercook.com/Commerce/e-Store) shopper being developed, the dietary supplements have never been more accessible and, therefore, the the general population can now afford to take his or her supplements on a regular basis. According to Zoupos and Spais (2022), the distribution points of the product were easily accessible via an electronic retail channel and provided the user with information about the product, which contributes to a high probability of consumers being comfortable with purchasing dietary supplements. The convenience of locating a nutrition product on the internet is among the influential factors because of the convenience of the shopping process, the product choice, and the price. implications of these findings is a factors pointing to the significance of accessibility in the choice that a consumer makes when buying dietary supplements.

Health awareness and Medical conditions

Health literacy and health condition on the overall can effect dietary supplements consumption among the individuals. To represent, people who have a disease caused by a nutritional deficit, or possess long term diseases are more likely to resort to dietary supplements as a cure to the diseases or in prevention (Zhang et al., 2020). There is a high demand of dietary supplements among many people to cover any existing gaps in their daily food intake in the body as prescribed by the World Health Organization (2022) due to their high nutrient requirements. individuals lacking preexisting conditions will most likely consume dietary supplements in their bid to boost their health at large, high concentration of immunity and great bodily health. It is due to this distinction, the reason

behind the consumption of dietary supplements is sufficient to set a comparison between two categories of consumers.

Research Gap

In contrast to the previous researches, which have offered practical details on using dietary supplements, previous researches have focused on particular issues or areas of interest, such as, benefits of consuming dietary supplements on one hand or the moral obligation of companies that sell dietary supplements however hand. Very few studies examined the overall influence of these variables (e.g., age, income, worries regarding safety of products, product availability, etc.) on intention to purchase dietary supplements immediately among consumers in India. Further, we cannot find much empirical evidence existing in the current study to prove the distinction between dietary supplements consumption between consumers with existing medical conditions and those without.

In the present research, we intend to address these literature gaps by means of the way of integration of two sets of demographics variables i.e. core purchasing dimensions and health - related variables to examine the overall effect of for each variable on the intention of the consumer to purchase dietary supplements in a quantitative analytic research. Combined, such approach enables good managerial decisions regarding the dietary supplement market.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

In this study, we decided to use the quantitative descriptive approach. This design assisted us to consider the association between variables and the features of the population which influence purchase behavior. It was likewise able to tell us the features that are of paramount importance in the decision to purchase and the usages pattern in relation to dietary supplements. It was appropriate to adopt a quantitative approach owing to the following reasons. Our survey technique was created on a survey, and the data were obtained with the help of a questionnaire.

Sample and Data Gathering

Data gathered for the study were filled through use of online form created and sent using the Google Forms application using a sample of 143 respondents. This particular method used in sampling was convenience sampling. The process has examined accessibility of pool of prospective respondents who can be integrated in our study and their inclination to it is the part of it. This sample contains multiple age brackets of people with different backgrounds of males, female health issues to deliver a vision into the view of diverse opinions on the consumer side. The participation in the study was complete voluntary and the goal of the ongoing scholarly work was explicitly stated.

Instrument Design

A questionnaire was created on the grounds of the in-depth analysis of the existing literature. It contained three sections:

Section A - Data regarding the population features of the individual, they include age, marital status, level of education, gender, earning status and the presence of any health condition.

Section B - Health awareness and supplement use behavior, which involves health checkup awareness and deficiency awareness and the kind of dietary supplements people use.

Section C: Factors affecting purchase intention, such as sensitivity to price, safety issues, accessibility, and certification were all on an ordinal scale.

Items were largely predicated on responses were measured on a Likert measure, where complex cuts reflected stronger influence.

Variables of Survey

1. Dependent Variable: The intention to buy dietary supplements.
2. Independent Variables: Price sensitive, Perceived safety, Accessibility and availability, Certification awareness.
3. Demographic Variables: Education, Age, Gender, Earning status.
4. Grouping Variable: yes/no: Have medical condition.

Dependability and Rationality

The level of the scale consistency of the scale items that measure the various facets of the purchase process was examined using the Cronbach Alpha method of analyzing the scale items.

The outcome of the research was considered acceptably on the determination of the estimation of 0.60+. Relied on the adaptation of research questions/questionnaire, this is because of the previous research studies and its content validity has already proved to be appropriate to this research.

Data Examination Methods

This was reflected in the data analysis through coding data by its characteristics and SPSS. The statistical instruments that were embraced served the drive that they were intended to serve.

1. Descriptive Statistics: To describe participant demographics and other information.
2. Reliability Analysis: To test item internal consistency.
3. One-way ANOVA: To identify the difference founded on the use of supplements with regard to the age and.
4. Independent Samples t-test: to examine the difference in dietary supplements take between the participants with and with the history of the former medical conditions.
5. Regression Analysis: This will entail establishing the degree to which the factors influence dietary supplement consumption.

These methods of statistics assisted in the complete examination of the data according to the objectives and purpose of our research.

Ethical Compliance

While conducting the research, ethical issues are put into consideration. Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured very participants. Information acquired was used exhaustively in the situation of study and various other reasons that involved knowledge. personal information was requested, and participation was entirely voluntary of withdrawing throughout the research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The section provides the empirical results, the outcome of our work, and dwells upon the findings on the highlight of the research questions and objectives.

The findings of the analysis have stood on the information received about the 143 respondents and observed by using SPSS.

The Demographic Features of the Interviewees

In this section, the demographic profile of the survey respondents is described. Table 4.1 presents the people of the participants based on their age, gender, medical conditions and purchase conduct in the future.

The age classification shows that the largest people of the example was Age Group 1 with the people of 53.1 percent of the sample. This classification was followed by Age Group 3 which made 26.6 and then Age Group 2 which made 18.9. The non-respondents who were below the Age Group 4 were then narrowed down to 1.4%. According to Table 3, most of the respondents belong to young and middle-aged age categories and hence age groups vary and indulge in the consumption of dietary supplements and purchasing behaviour as a whole that the sample is representative. The defendants were evenly distributed in footings of gender whereby, 53.1 % of the defendants were under Gender Category 2, and 46.9% of the defendants are under Gender Category 1. This close representation enables a study of the two groups by means of the comparison.

Five out of five respondents answered with a medical condition that he/she had pertaining to health status and the popular of the defendants answered that he/she has no health related issues Conferring to a trend, a popular of the defendants consume dietary supplements more for maintenance of health than for treatment of a disease. A lot of people want to buy these products in the future, even if it does not have the opinion of the doctor. Of the respondents (56), over 56.6% said they consume dietary supplements without consulting a doctor and 43.4% said that they would refer the doctor before consuming them. This variation is clarified by the fact that the difference in the health-related knowledge, the perceived risk, and self-medication confidence among the consumers. In general, the investigations of how individual factors influence dietary supplement use/ purchase intention in the other sections of the paper are appropriate background since the sample is demographical.

Table 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents (N = 143)

Variable	Category	Count	Percentage (%)
Age Group	1	76	53.1
	2	27	18.9
	3	38	26.6
	4	2	1.4
Gender	1	67	46.9
	2	76	53.1
Medical Condition	Yes (1)	29	20.3
	No (2)	114	79.7
Future Purchase	Yes (1)	81	56.6
	No (2)	62	43.4

Reliability Analysis

This was conducted to control the consistency measuring scale: internal consistency of the measuring scale was tested to regulate the dependability of instrument before subsequent statistical analysis could be done. The reliability of the items was tested by Cronbachs Alpha coefficient using the measurement of the key factors influencing the purchase intention which included the perceived safety, perceived effectiveness, pricing and availability.

The analysis gave the Cronbachs Alpha of 0.688 reported in **Table 4.2** and the results imply that acceptable level of internal consistency of an exploratory study with respect to social science research. These results demonstrate that the scale items were sufficiently consistent and sufficiently good in gauging the perceptions of the respondents with reference to purchasing behavior on dietary supplement.

The instrument was found to be good enough to proceed with additional statistical analysis, ANOVA, t-tests, and regression. The reliability coefficient was high, and its value exceeded 0.60, which is the minimum acceptable value.

Table 4.2. Reliability Analysis of Purchase Intention Factors

Measurement Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Purchase Intention Factors (Safety, Effectiveness, Pricing, Availability)	4	0.688

Effect of Age and Gender on the intake of dietary supplements

To achieve the realization on whether the difference in dietary supplements consumption exists among the demographic assemblies, numerical tests were directed based on the age and gender. As depicted in Table 4.3, the ANOVA, suitable statistical approaches were practical in comparing age groups and independent samples t-test was used to liken difference in consumption level between males and females.

We also sought the contribution of the age factor in dietary supplements consumption and undertook ANOVA. The results revealed quite a clear difference in age ($F = 8.436$, $p < 0.05$). The more aged respondents had higher chances of utilizing supplements linked to the younger respondents. Reasonable, when you reason about it, because the older individuals are more health aware, more concerned about being ahead of potential challenges and to be quite honest when you are older and when you are past a certain age you start to have health problems.

The t-test test however revealed that gender is not significantly different, in respect of supplement consumption ($p > 0.05$). Both the male and the female respondents were equally using the supplements, which means that none of the factors of the gender significantly influence how the respondents consume them in this sample.

All these results propose that age is a considerable predictor of the consumption of dietary supplements, but, on the other hand, gender is a contributory factor to the intake habit to a lesser extent. This leads to relevance of age variation in the framework of consumption trend of dietary supplements market.

Table 4.3 One-Way ANOVA Results of age and Dietary Supplement Consumption.

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	Sig. (p)
Between Groups	6.842	3	2.281	8.436	0.00
Within Groups	37.621	139	0.271	—	—
Total	44.463	142	—	—	—

According to the results of **Figure 4.1**, consumption of dietary supplements varies among the various age groups whereby as the age group increases, consumption of the dietary supplement also increases.

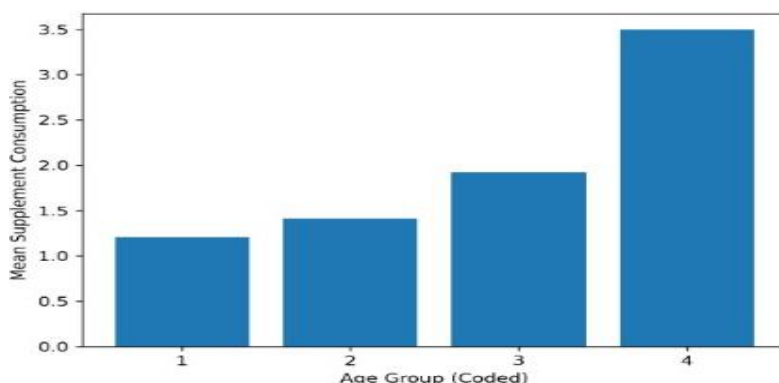


Figure 4.1. The age variation in dietary supplements.

Result of Demographic Issues on Purchase Intention.

The section will be on the result of the demographic factors particularly age and gender on the future intention to purchase dietary supplements by the respondents. The differences in intention to purchase were also assessed using the independent samples t-test, where the changes in the gender based differences were evaluated, and the variances in the age were also assessed.

Independent samples t-tests were done in gender and age in case of purchase intention. The difference in gender was observed to be statistically significant ($t = 2.068$, $p < 0.05$), i.e., men and women do not treat the purchase of future supplement in a similar manner. This will probably culminate in perceptions of the two collections near health in overall, the method of risk they feel is the most interesting to them and their overall shopping behaviour in general.

On the contrary, the age was statistically not relevant in regard to its impact on future purchase intention ($p > 0.05$). It also fails to heavily use age as an indicator to predetermine intention of respondents to purchase the supplement again despite the previous finding that age does influence the equal of supplement consumption. This earnings that, consumption behavior and purchase intention are also dependent on the different demographic factors.

On the whole, the results indicate that gender is more dominant in shaping the future purchasing decisions, and age is the leading factor in determining the consumption patterns. This difference demonstrates that that the behavioral usage and the purchase intention are analyzed separately when the consumer behavior study in the dietary supplements market.

Table 4.4. Independent Samples t-Test Comparing Gender and Purchase Intention

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	df	Sig. (p)
Purchase	1	67	1.47	0.51	2.068	141	0.04
Intention	2	76	1.61	0.49	—	—	—

Effect of Medical Condition on Use of Supplements and Purchase Intention.

The provided part examines the hypothesis on whether the presence of an existing medical condition influences the consumption of dietary supplements by the respondents and their eventual purchase of such products. The t-tests were conducted as independent samples that were to put the respondents with and without the medical condition into comparison.

The findings in Table 4.5 indicate that the correlation between the overall purchase intention and the health conditions (with or without medical conditions) was not originate to be statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). This infers that health state is not always a factor that predisposes a person to purchase dietary supplements in the future.

Nevertheless, the change in the use of dietary supplements was considerable when basing on the recommendations of a physician ($t = -2.479$, $p < 0.05$). Medical advice was a important predictor of use of supplements in the defendants who took them as likened to those who did not seek medical advice. This infers that individuals with health problems should have a more medical-sound and sensible approach.

The findings reported that the state of a medical condition is relevant to the usage of dietary supplements, as opposed to the intention to buy in general. Already sick patients find it cooler to comply with professional recommendations and healthy people are more prone to self-prescription. Overall, the results suggest that the distinction across the two categories of consumption behavior therapeutic and preventive is of utmost importance in researching consumer reactions in the market of dietary supplements.

Table 4.5. Results Independent Samples t-test of Medical Condition and Use of Supplements.

Variable	Medical Condition	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	df	Sig. (p)
Purchase Intention	Yes	29	1.483	0.509	-0.998	42.48	0.324
	No	114	1.588	0.492	-	-	-
Doctor-Prescribed Supplement Usage	Yes	29	1.138	0.351	-2.479	56.91	0.016
	No	114	1.333	0.474	-	-	-

CONCLUSION AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS.

Conclusion

This paper investigates the issues touching the decision to purchase and intake dietary supplement on the base of the 143 respondent's data. To acquire balanced perspective of consumer behaviour in the dietary supplement market, the element of the purchasing MALAYS and health-related dimensions of the analysis has been taken. Another factor that also makes significant contributions to the level of dietary supplement consumption based on the results is the age of the person.

The respondents who consumed all the functional foods in large quantities were the aged who can be more health conscious and preventive health oriented. Age is not a factor that determines the buying intent. This shows that other types of elements other than age influence the use behaviour and choice of buying. Gender is another predictor that was triggered because it is discriminating male and female clients. They are not plotting to purchase dietary supplements the same way in the near future. The concept of gender was a non-material one that does not provide any of the values, but merely influences the real consumption. The use preference spending on purchase or consumption is one of the more valid arguments in business. Moreover, the seriousness of the health condition complicated and severely influenced total purchasing-intention.

As the issue gets more complicated, the pre-existing medical complication of the defendants would be more prone to link with supplements prescribed by the physician, so, more responsible and knowledgeable ingestion would be expected. The multiple regression model shows that the availability and accessibility of the multiple regression exert a significant impact on purchase intention. It is established from literature consumer behavior in dietary supplement market is multidimensional allowing generalization of these findings.

Managerial Implications

The findings of our research have a number of practical implications to the managers, marketers and policymakers working in the dietary supplements industry.

First of all, availability has high influence on purchase intention which demonstrates that the companies need to be focused on the effective channels of distribution and to ensure that the products available within the market are representative on both offline and online markets. Having more access to customers would significantly enhance the way consumers are engaged and sales performance.

Second, the age factor has a dimensional impact on consumption behavior, and the marketing policy of targeting the old consumer should be based on the prevention of health, quality assurance, and long-term health advantages. The promotion can be pegged on compatibility with lifestyles, convenience and product variety in the case of younger consumers.

Third, gender is a significant factor in the purchase intention, i.e. marketing communication should be specific and it should address gender preferences and concerns. Customized messages will strengthen brand association and brand trust.

Fourth, the accentuated dependence on the medical recommendations of the consumers with the health conditions further stresses on the importance of the collaboration with the medical workers. In order to create a higher level

of credibility among medically conscious consumers, companies must ensure that they perform transparent labeling, regulatory compliance and adequacy of health information.

Finally, although price and perceived safety were not mentioned as the main predictors in this study, even affordable cost and quality standards are critical regarding consumer loyalty and brand image over a time.

Limitations and Future directions.

Our research has a restricted contribution and the study has certain limitations. This could affect the generalizability of the results due to convenience sampling and a very small sample. Another weakness may also be the bias in the responses because of the self-reported data.

Research can be conducted in future by taking into account the use of bigger and more varied samples. The longitudinal investigation design would also work to observe the changes in consumer behavior as time goes by. Other variables that can be additional to the subsequent work are psychological variables, e.g., health motivation, risk perception, personal beliefs. This would assist us to obtain more information on the intake of the dietary supplements and the purchasing pattern.

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