THE ROLE OF PERCEIVED VALUE IN LINKING CONSUMER PREFERENCE AND SATISFACTION TO PURCHASE INTENTION FOR HERBAL PRODUCTS

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the influence of consumer preference and satisfaction on the purchase intention of herbal products, with perceived value serving as a mediating factor. It aims to address the need for effective marketing strategies and product enhancement by providing deeper insights into consumer behavior within the rapidly growing herbal product industry. The research was conducted among 517 users of herbal products in the Tiruchirappalli district of Tamil Nadu. One-Way ANOVA and post-hoc analysis were employed to assess the impact of socio-economic variables, while structural equation modeling was used to analyse the relationships among the constructs. Consumer demographic profiles were interpreted using percentage analysis. The findings reveal that although distinct product choice and lifestyle orientation exert minimal influence, social pressure and brand loyalty significantly strengthen consumer preference and satisfaction. Purchase intention is positively affected by both preference and satisfaction. Furthermore, they influence perceived value, which acts as a mediator linking these factors to consumers' intention to purchase. When consumers perceive greater value in a product, they tend to exhibit stronger brand commitment, trust, and buying intentions. Socio-economic characteristics such as age, occupation, monthly income, and educational level substantially shape consumer purchasing behavior toward herbal products.

KEYWORDS: Herbal Products, Consumer preference, Consumer satisfaction, Perceived value, Purchase intention.

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

Herbal products, derived from natural plant sources, have been used since ancient times to meet nutritional, cosmetic, and therapeutic needs. Their growing popularity in recent decades is driven by increasing consumer awareness of health and wellness, a strong inclination toward natural ingredients, and concerns about the adverse effects of synthetic alternatives. These products are available in diverse forms, including traditional remedies, cosmetic items, and dietary supplements. Herbal products can be categorized based on their functions and benefits. Medicinal herbal products—such as herbal blends, therapeutic teas, and plant-based treatments—support the management of health conditions including stress, immunity, and digestion. Nutritional herbal products, including supplements and fortified food items, are consumed to enhance overall well-being. Personal care and cosmetic products such as herbal shampoos, face creams, and essential oils offer natural, chemical-free solutions for skincare and haircare. Additionally, herbal beverages like green tea are widely favored for their antioxidant and detoxifying properties. Many consumers across different segments view these products as safer and more suitable for long-term health maintenance. Recommendations from healthcare professionals and traditional medicine practitioners have further accelerated the growth of the herbal supplements, skincare, and wellness sectors. Moreover, environmentally conscious consumers increasingly prefer herbal products due to their sustainable sourcing and eco-friendly production methods. With expanding availability across online platforms and physical retail stores, herbal products have now become a regular part of daily consumer lifestyles. The rising global shift toward natural, plant-based alternatives is expected to continue shaping the future trajectory of the herbal product industry.

PREFERENCE AND SATISFACTION

Preference and satisfaction toward herbal products are largely shaped by consumers' tastes, expectations, and prior experiences with these items. Preference reflects a consumer's tendency or inclination to choose herbal products owing to their perceived benefits, whereas satisfaction denotes the level of fulfillment experienced after consumption (Wagle, 2022). Individuals who favour herbal products often emphasize sustainability, health-promoting properties, and natural ingredients. Concerns about artificial chemicals, possible adverse reactions, and environmental impact lead many consumers to choose herbal alternatives. Personal beliefs, past experiences, and the desire for safer and more effective solutions for nutrition, skincare, and overall wellness further influence their preferences (Saxena, 2019). Moreover, the association of herbal remedies with holistic health, traditional practices, and cultural relevance enhances consumer attraction.

Satisfaction increases when herbal products meet or surpass consumer expectations. People are more likely to continue purchasing herbal products when they witness noticeable improvements in health,

receive positive feedback from friends or family, or experience an enhanced sense of well-being (Ahmad et al., 2022). Products offering distinctive advantages—such as rare herbal ingredients, scientifically validated formulations, or conventional healing properties—tend to capture consumer attention. When consumers perceive herbal products as authentic and effective, their preference strengthens and their satisfaction deepens (Omar & Sabran, 2022).

Digital media and online platforms further elevate consumer awareness, building trust through influencer endorsements, customer reviews, and user testimonials. Consumers often follow trends supported by credible sources, and thus positive word-of-mouth and expert recommendations significantly enhance preference. Social reinforcement from peers and online communities also contributes to greater satisfaction (Thanisorn, 2013).

Herbal products are frequently incorporated into the daily routines of consumers who embrace eco-friendly, plant-based, or organic lifestyles. These individuals are more likely to choose herbal cosmetics, supplements, and wellness products that align with their personal values (Ahmad et al., 2015). Consumers tend to remain loyal to brands that consistently offer high-quality herbal products (Ismail & Mokhtar, 2016). Long-term trust and engagement are fostered by factors such as ethical practices, scientific validation of ingredients, and transparent sourcing. A brand with a strong reputation is more likely to retain consumers, who associate it with reliability and effectiveness (Wirasti et al., 2020). As awareness of natural and sustainable products continues to grow, consumer preference and satisfaction toward herbal products are expected to significantly shape future market developments (Mensah et al., 2022).

Here is your **Perceived Value** section rewritten with synonyms, improved academic tone, and clearer flow while keeping the same meaning:

PERCEIVED VALUE

Consumers' judgments of the perceived value of herbal products are shaped by factors such as price, quality, benefits, and overall satisfaction. Individuals assess herbal products based on their effectiveness, safety, affordability, and alignment with personal health goals. A higher perceived value often leads to stronger brand loyalty and greater trust (Suryadi et al., 2018). Products featuring scientific validation and natural, chemical-free ingredients are generally viewed as more reliable. The presence of certifications and endorsements further enhances the credibility of these products. Consumers tend to prefer herbal products that offer long-term advantages at a reasonable cost, carefully weighing the advantages against the price. Accessibility—whether in physical stores or online platforms—also enhances convenience and contributes to a more positive perception of value (Soesilowati et al., 2024). Marketing and branding strategies, such as product positioning, attractive

packaging, and promotional campaigns, influence how consumers perceive value. Positive reviews, recommendations, and expert endorsements strengthen consumer confidence.

When herbal products consistently deliver expected outcomes, they elevate perceived value, increase satisfaction, and enhance purchase intention. Perceived value plays a vital role in shaping consumer preference and loyalty, helping herbal products sustain their competitive advantage and market relevance (Rajasekaran & Banu, 2020)

PURCHASE OBJECTIVE

Consumers' intentions to buy herbal products are shaped by perceived benefits, pricing, trustworthiness, and compatibility with their lifestyles. Owing to their natural composition, health-promoting properties, and minimal side effects compared to synthetic alternatives, many consumers favour herbal products. A strong belief in the effectiveness of herbal remedies encourages long-term preference and repeat purchases. Certifications, reputable brands, and transparent ingredient information play important roles in guiding consumer decision-making (Gupta et al., 2023). Online reviews, expert endorsements, and positive word-of-mouth further strengthen purchase intention. Convenience is also enhanced through reasonable pricing, promotional offers, and widespread product availability both in physical stores and online platforms. Consumers evaluate whether the product offers value for the money, which directly influences their likelihood of purchasing (Mitariani et al., 2022). Herbal products appeal to consumers seeking sustainable, natural, and chemical-free options. As awareness of holistic wellness continues growing, more individuals incorporate herbal products into their daily routines, thereby boosting purchase intention (Leevisitpattana & Srisopa, 2020).

Purchases become more likely when consumers trust the brand and associate herbal products with favourable experiences. Perceived effectiveness, confidence in product quality, affordability, and alignment with health-conscious lifestyles all play crucial roles in shaping consumers' intentions to buy herbal products. Brands can sustain consumer engagement and market growth by effectively addressing these factors (Rahmawan, 2020).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Rising consumer interest in natural, chemical-free alternatives has significantly increased the appeal of herbal products. The perceived value of these products acts as a mediating factor between inclination, satisfaction, and actual purchasing behaviour (Wantara et al., 2023). Consumers' inclination toward herbal products is shaped by personal tastes, past experiences, and awareness of their health-related benefits. Individuals who favour natural remedies often seek options that align with their lifestyle choices (Vijayadharani et al., 2022). Satisfaction is reflected in the consumer's overall experience with the product, including its effectiveness and quality. Positive experiences

strengthen trust and loyalty, thereby encouraging repeat purchases and increasing the likelihood of recommending the products to others (Onodugo et al., 2023). Products offering unique advantages or distinctive compositions enhance both preference and satisfaction (Wang et al., 2023). Consumers are more willing to purchase products they perceive as superior in terms of effectiveness, natural formulation, and long-term health benefits (Handayani, 2022). Social recommendations from friends, family, and peer groups also substantially influence purchase decisions, as individuals tend to rely on opinions from close social circles (Ismail & Mokhtar, 2015).

Product visibility is further boosted through community discussions, influencer promotions, and online reviews. Social validation enhances consumer confidence, thereby increasing the likelihood of brand loyalty and repeat purchases (Kautsar et al., 2015). Herbal products attract consumers who prioritize sustainable living, organic alternatives, and wellness-oriented lifestyles (Khayru & Issalillah, 2021). Purchase intention strengthens when the product aligns with broader lifestyle practices. As consumers seek continuity in their wellness routines, seamlessly integrating herbal products into daily habits further supports their buying behaviour (Chandrasiri & Wijesekara, 2019).

Brand loyalty is demonstrated through a consumer's long-term trust and commitment to a specific brand. Loyalty grows when consumers find brands that consistently provide high-quality, safe, and effective products (Seethapathy et al., 2019). Businesses that maintain ingredient authenticity and transparency tend to retain customers more successfully within the herbal product market. Consumers with strong brand loyalty are less inclined to switch to competing brands and more likely to continue purchasing from the same company (Anthoons et al., 2021). Satisfaction reinforces loyalty, as a positive product experience increases confidence in the brand. Highly loyal consumers exhibit strong purchase intentions and often prefer familiar, proven products over new or untested alternatives (Trivedi, 2018). Consumers are more likely to purchase and recommend a product when they perceive it as valuable (Tam et al., 2019). Perceived value encompasses several elements, including product quality, fair pricing, long-term benefits, and ethical considerations. When consumers believe they are receiving superior value, satisfaction rises, along with their likelihood of staying loyal to the product (Suriyage & Leon, 2023). Affordability and availability also contribute to perceived value. Consumers assess whether the product's price is justified compared to its benefits and overall satisfaction (Mubarak & Mufeeth, 2020). A balanced price–value relationship promotes continued purchases. Brands that emphasize safety, authenticity, and scientifically supported benefits enhance perceived value and purchasing likelihood (Astrini et al., 2021).

Consumers tend to repurchase when they trust a product and are satisfied with its performance. Positive experiences strengthen long-term loyalty and encourage brand advocacy (Prakash et al., 2024). Individuals who support natural or holistic health approaches are particularly drawn to brands

International Journal of Research in Commerce and Management Studies

ISSN 2582-2292

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that effectively communicate the benefits of herbal products. Promotional deals and personalised recommendations further increase the chances of purchase (Wiwoho & Riptiono, 2022).

PURPOSE AND METHODS

The primary objective of this study was to assess how consumer inclination and satisfaction influence purchase intention for herbal products, with perceived value acting as a mediating variable. This framework helps in understanding the decision-making patterns of herbal product users in the Tiruchirappalli district of Tamil Nadu. A causal research design was adopted to explore the effect of inclination and satisfaction on consumers' buying intentions. Purposive sampling was employed to identify suitable respondents, resulting in the collection of 517 valid samples from herbal product users. Data were gathered through a structured questionnaire. To enhance clarity and accuracy, a pilot test involving fifty respondents was conducted prior to the main survey. Validity and reliability tests were performed to ensure the credibility and consistency of the questionnaire.

Appropriate statistical tools were utilized to analyze the collected data. A simple percentage analysis was applied to describe the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Structural equation modelling was used to investigate the causal relationships among inclination, satisfaction, perceived value, and purchase intention. Furthermore, one-way ANOVA and post-hoc analyses were carried out to determine the influence of socioeconomic variables on the research constructs. Ethical considerations were strictly observed throughout the research process to maintain participant confidentiality and ensure unbiased reporting. Overall, the methodology offers a systematic approach to understanding consumer behaviour in the context of herbal product purchasing

4. RESULTS

Analysis of Socio-Economic Characteristics: The distribution of socio-economic characteristics of consumers like gender, age, education, monthly earnings, and occupation are analyzed in Table 1.

Table 1: Socio-Economic Characteristics

Profile	Distribution	Number	Percent
Gender	Male	301	58.2%
	Female	216	41.8%
Age	Below 30 years	226	43.7%
	30 – 50 years	224	43.3%
	Above 50 years	67	13.0%
Education	School	248	48.0%
	UG	126	24.4%

International Journal of Research in Commerce and Management Studies

ISSN 2582-2292

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	PG	143	27.7%
Monthly Earnings	Less than Rs.30,000	290	56.1%
	Rs.30,000 – Rs. 50,000	148	28.6%
	More than Rs.50,000	79	15.3%
Occupation	Business	152	29.4%
	Employed	175	33.8%
	Retired/Others	190	36.8%

Table 1 shows the consumer profile based on their gender, age, education, monthly income, and occupation. There is a significantly higher proportion of male consumers among the respondents, with 58.2% of them being men and 41.8% being women. According to the age distribution43.7% of consumers are under 30 years, 43.3% of consumers are between the ages of 30 and 50 years, and 13.1% of consumers are over 50 years, younger and middle-aged people make up the majority in age. In terms of education,48.0%of consumers have finished their school education, with undergraduate degrees accounting for 24.4% and postgraduate degrees for 27.7%. Monthly earnings shows that 56.1% of consumersearn less than Rs.30,000 a month, while 28.6% earn between Rs.30,000 and Rs.50,000, only 15.3% of consumers earn more than Rs.50,000 per month. Consumers work in a variety of occupations; 33.8% are employed in private or government organizations, 29.4% of consumers are engaged in business, and 36.8% are retired or engaged in agriculture activities.

Cause and Effect Relationship among Research Variables: Structural equation modelling tests the relationship among Unique Product (UPRO), Social Influence (SLIN), Lifestyle Affinity (LSAF), Brand Fidelity (BFLT), Inclination and Contentment (INCT), Perceived Value (PRVL) and Purchase Intention (PITN), the model is depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Structural Equation Model
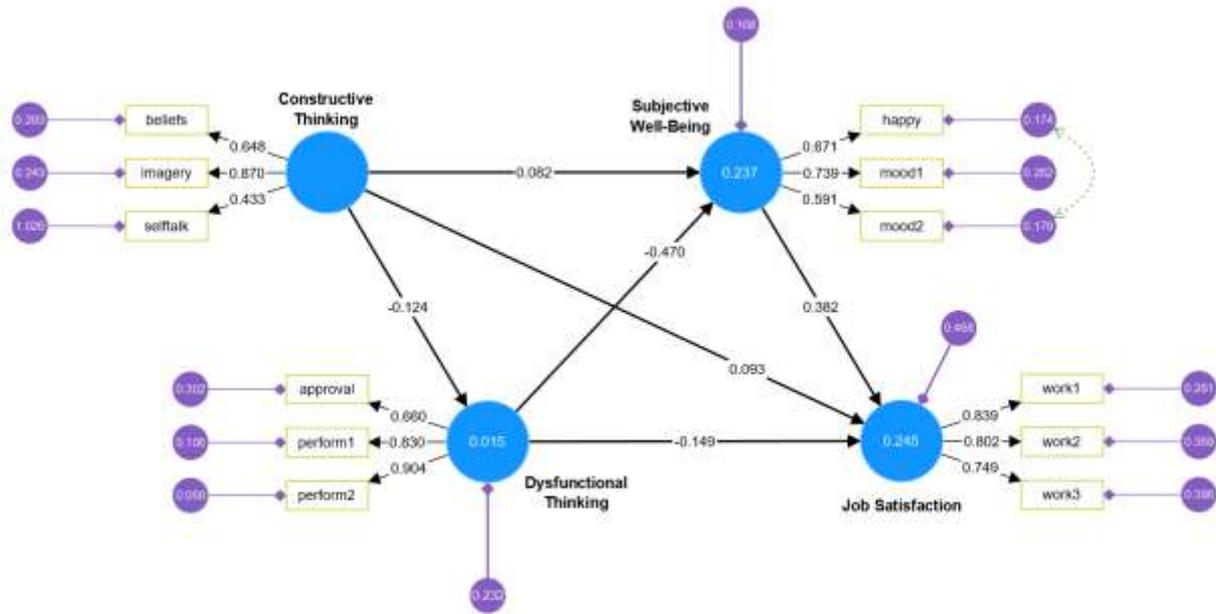
The hypothesized relationship among such research variables deliberated in structural equation model, the subsequent hypotheses are recommended to test.

H_1 -Preceding variables exert a noteworthy influence on distinctive product features, societal impact, lifestyle compatibility, brand allegiance, predisposition and satisfaction, perceived worth, and purchasing intention.

H_2 - Distinctive product attributes, societal impact, lifestyle compatibility, and brand allegiance significantly influence predisposition and satisfaction.

H_3 - Predisposition and satisfaction have a meaningful impact on purchasing intention.

H_4 - Perceived worth acts as an intermediary between predisposition and satisfaction and purchasing intention.

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Table 2: Path Analysis

Path			Unstd. Estimate	Std. Estimate	t	p
UPRO1 – Introduction of new herbal formulations	<---	UPRO	1.000	.925		
UPRO2 – Development of multi-functional products	<---		.478	.360	8.835	***
UPRO3 – Use of cutting-edge technology in production	<---		.856	.756	24.128	***
UPRO4 – Specific product options for individual benefits	<---		.557	.607	16.864	***
SLIN1 – Peer recommendations and word-of-mouth	<---	SLIN	1.000	.898		
SLIN2 – Endorsements from influencers or celebrities	<---		.725	.691	19.516	***
SLIN3 – Testimonials from known individuals or experts	<---		.903	.765	23.160	***
SLIN4 – Participation in online and offline consumer forums	<---		.942	.858	29.129	***
LSAF1 – Alignment with health and wellness goals	<---	LSAF	1.000	.398		
LSAF2 – Fit with eco-friendly and sustainable living	<---		1.959	.929	9.154	***
LSAF3 – Suitability for holistic and alternative health practices	<---		.843	.323	5.841	***
LSAF4 – Demand for convenience and ready-to-use products	<---		1.959	.905	9.169	***
BFLT1 – Consistent purchase of the same brand	<---	BFLT	1.000	.839		
BFLT2 – Positive perception of brand reputation	<---		.839	.847	23.081	***
BFLT3 – Resistance to switching to competitors	<---		.862	.826	22.255	***
BFLT4 – Willingness to recommend the brand to others	<---		.831	.860	23.602	***

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INCT1 – Inclination toward natural over synthetic products	<---		.869	.778	20.043	***
INCT2 – Prioritization of quality over price	<---		1.000	.802		
INCT3 – Selection based on product effectiveness	<---	INCT	.787	.579	13.856	***
INCT4 – Preference for brands with ethical practices	<---		1.113	.858	22.999	***
INCT5 – Preference for products with positive reviews and ratings	<---		1.255	.941	26.331	***
PRVL1 – Alignment of benefits with the price paid	<---		1.000	.693		
PRVL2 – Perception of product durability and effectiveness	<---		1.573	.990	21.560	***
PRVL3 – Availability of additional features or benefits	<---	PRVL	1.047	.667	14.820	***
PRVL4 – Contentment with product functionality	<---		1.534	.992	21.595	***
PRVL5 – Comparison of value against competitors	<---		1.453	.919	20.118	***
PITN1 – Likelihood of buying based on product appeal	<---		1.000	.977		
PITN2 – Influence of promotional offers on purchasing decisions	<---		.978	.988	83.163	***
PITN3 – Priority of specific brands during purchase	<---		.532	.676	20.293	***
PITN4 – Willingness to explore new product categories	<---	PITN	.914	.875	37.868	***
PITN5 – Interest in repurchasing based on past experiences	<---		1.023	.983	78.169	***
PITN6 – Decision-making influenced by product availability	<---		.609	.734	23.736	***
INCT	<---	UPRO	-.055	-.058	-4.542	***
INCT	<---	SLIN	1.021	.923	8.541	***
INCT	<---	LSAF	-.010	-.005	-5.150	***
INCT	<---	BFLT	.077	.099	3.580	***
PRVL	<---	INCT	.261	.307	6.593	***

PITN	<---	INCT	.238	.175	4.380	***
PITN	<---	PRVL	.794	.494	10.992	***

*** *Significant at 1%*

Fit index values are computed after the execution of structural model. It implies that the data and the model fit each other perfectly. The computed CMIN/df value of 4.379, which falls inside the recognized threshold range of 3 to 5, guarantees a solid match. Furthermore, the RMSEA value of 0.056 securely above the benchmark level of 0.06. The baseline comparisons (0.922 for NFI, 0.908 for RFI, 0.910 for IFI, 0.901 for TLI, and 0.910 for CFI) and goodness of fit measurements (0.917 for GFI and 0.904 for AGFI) exceed the benchmark threshold of 0.9.

Table 2 depicts that features like the introduction of new herbal formulations, the creation of multipurpose products, cutting-edge technology, and specific product options together determine unique herbal products. Strong congruence with consumer expectations is demonstrated by the specific product options for individual benefits and use of cutting-edge technology in production. Social influence is effected by elements like expert testimonials, influencer endorsements, peer recommendations, and participation in consumer forums. It is largely formed by participation in both online and offline forums, influencer endorsements, and testimonies. Convenience-driven decisions, eco-friendly behaviour, holistic health appropriateness, and health and wellness alignment are all included in lifestyle affinity. Responses are stronger for the demand for convenience and ready-to-use products and the preference for eco-friendly and sustainable living, signifying that consumer expectations are shifting in favor of healthier and sustainable options. Consistent buying habits, brand reputation, reluctance to switch, and word-of-mouth recommendations are all used to gauge brand loyalty. Positive perception of brand reputation and willingness to recommend the brand to others show strong relationships with long-term commitment and consumer trust.

Consumers show preferences for natural products, value quality above price, choose products based on efficacy, like ethical brands, and rely on reviews. Preference for brands with ethical practices and prioritization of quality over price hold substantial importance, preference for products with positive reviews and ratings have a big impact on inclination. Benefit-price alignment, longevity, extra features, functioning contentment, and competition comparison all influence how value of herbal product is perceived. There are larger correlations between perception of product durability and effectiveness and contentment with product functionality. Product appeal, special offers, brand preference, openness to trying new things, prior experience, and availability all affect consumers' intentions to buy. Strong correlations between influence of promotional offers, interest in repurchasing based on past experiences and likelihood of buying based on product appeal support their significance in influencing purchase decisions. The antecedents have significant effect on its respective research

variables. The estimated p-values are significant at 1% level, it supports the hypothesis (H_1), antecedent variables have significant effect on unique product, social influence, lifestyle affinity, brand fidelity, inclination and contentment, perceived value and purchase intention.

Consumer inclination and unique product qualities had a negative correlation (-0.055, p<0.000), it validates that herbal product uniqueness by itself does not always translate into higher inclination and contentment. Innovative features could make a product stand out from the competition, but they don't always result in more satisfied or preferred consumers. There is a significant positive correlation between social influence and inclination and contentment (1.021, p<0.000). The result demonstrates how word-of-mouth, endorsements, and peer recommendations influence the formation of consumer preferences. Consumers' propensity towards a product will increase when they obtain good feedback from reliable sources, exhibits the importance of social proof in consumer decision-making. The impact of lifestyle affinity on inclination and contentment is negligible (-0.010, p<0.000). The result implies that although a product's fit with a consumer's lifestyle may seem significant, it does not always result in a strong desire to buy. Convenience, individual tastes, and other options could lessen the direct influence of lifestyle alignment on purchasing decisions. Brand fidelity has a positive impact on inclination and contentment (0.077, p<0.000). Consumers often choose a particular herbal brand grow to trust and be loyal to it, which increases their likelihood of sticking with it. Consumer tendency is strengthened by quality assurance, prior favourable experiences, and familiarity with a brand's offers; it further supports the idea that brand commitment forms preferences. The result affirms that social influence and brand fidelity have positive effect but unique product and lifestyle affinity have negative effect on inclination and contentment towards herbal products. Single-unit rise in unique product, social influence, lifestyle affinity, and brand fidelity will surge -0.055-unit, 1.021-unit, -0.010-unit and 0.077-unit in inclination and contentment on herbal products. The p-values are significant at 1% level, it supports the hypothesis (H_2), unique product, social influence, lifestyle affinity and brand fidelity have significant effect on inclination and contentment.

Inclination and contentment had a positive effect on purchase intention (0.238, p<0.000). The relationship demonstrates how consumer inclination and contentment influences purchase intention of consumers to herbal products. Single-unit rise in inclination and contentment will surge 0.238-unit in purchase intention. The p-value is significant at 1% level, it supports the hypothesis (H_3), inclination and contentment has significant effect on purchase intention. Furthermore, the direct effect shows that inclination and contentment had a positive effect on perceived value (0.261, p<0.000). Consumers perceive more value when they are happy with their selections and feel that a product's features correspond with their own, which in turn affects their intention to buy. Purchase intention is highly influenced by perceived value (0.794, p<0.000), shows that a consumer's evaluation of a product's advantages, value, and price justification directly affects their propensity to buy. Stronger purchase

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ISSN 2582-2292

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intentions are fueled by higher perceived value, which boosts confidence in purchasing decisions.

Mediating Role of Perceived Value: The indirect or mediation effect of perceived value between inclination and contentment and purchase intention on herbal products is examined with hypothesis (H_4).

Table 3: Mediation of PRVL between INCT and PITN

Effect	Path Relationship			Estimate	p
Mediation Path A	PRVL	<---	INCT	.261	***
Direct	PITN	<---	INCT	.238	***
Mediation Path B	PITN	<---	PRVL	.794	***

*** *Significant at 1%*

Table 3 shows that there is a direct correlation between inclination and contentment and purchase intention of 0.238. The calculated values for the effects of inclination and contentment on perceived value and perceived value on purchase intention are 0.261 and 0.794, respectively, to determine the mediation effect. The total effect is assessed to be 0.445234, with the estimated mediation path value being 0.207234 (0.261 x 0.794). inclination and contentment and purchase intention are partially impacted by perceived value, as evidenced by the variance for the mediation effect to total effect of 0.4654, which is greater than the 0.2 threshold. Consequently, the hypothesis (H_4) states that perceived value partially mediates between inclination and contentment and purchase intention of herbal products.

Effect of Socio-Economic Characteristics on Research Variables: Socio-economic characteristics of consumers has any effect on research variables such as, unique product, social influence, lifestyle affinity, brand fidelity, inclination and contentment, perceived value and purchase intention are inspected. The hypothesis (H_5) asserts that socio-economic characteristics have significant effect on research variables.

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Table 4: One-Way ANOVA

Research Variables		Socio-Economic Characteristics				
		Gender *(t-test)*	Age	Education	Monthly Earnings	Occupation
Unique Product	F	-0.989	10.670	10.724	17.569	22.143
	Sig.	0.323	0.000***	0.000***	0.000***	0.000***
Social Influence	F	-0.727	9.992	14.421	24.425	23.262
	Sig.	0.468	0.000***	0.000***	0.000***	0.000***
Lifestyle Affinity	F	0.188	4.707	7.523	4.038	11.987
	Sig.	0.851	0.009***	0.001***	0.018**	0.000***
Brand Fidelity	F	1.337	4.159	6.272	4.022	3.872
	Sig.	0.182	0.016**	0.002***	0.018**	0.021**
Inclination and Contentment	F	0.023	14.291	12.650	12.672	14.525
	Sig.	0.982	0.000***	0.000***	0.000***	0.000***
Perceived Value	F	0.511	11.191	15.117	4.234	16.129
	Sig.	0.609	0.000***	0.000***	0.015**	0.000***
Purchase Intention	F	-0.727	8.672	6.144	6.519	16.563
	Sig.	0.468	0.000***	0.002***	0.002***	0.000***

*** *Significant at 1%, ** Significant at 5%*

Table 4 shows that gender doesn't have any significant effect on research variables. Age, education, monthly earnings and occupation have significant effect on unique product, social influence, lifestyle affinity, brand fidelity, inclination and contentment, perceived value and purchase intention. For age, Duncun post-hoc created two identical subsets like below 30 years in subset *a*; and 30 – 50 years and above 50 years in subset *b* for unique product, social influence, and brand fidelity. Further, it formed below 30 years and 30 – 50 years in subset *a;* and above 50 years in subset *b* for perceived value and purchase intention. It also formed three identical subsets like below 30 years in subset *a;* 30 – 50 years in subset *a,b;* and above 50 years in subset *b* for lifestyle affinity. Then, it formed below 30 years in subset *a;* and 30 – 50 years in subset *b;* and above 50 years in subset *c* for inclination and contentment. For education, Scheffe post-hoc test created two identical subsets like school and UG in subset a; PG in subset b for unique product, lifestyle affinity, brand fidelity, inclination and contentment, perceived value and purchase intention. It also formed three identical subsets like school in subset *a;* and UG in subset *b;* and PG in subset *c* for social influence.For monthly earnings, Gabriel post-hoc test created two identical subsets like more than Rs.50,000 in subset *a*; and less than Rs.30,000 and Rs.30,000 – Rs.50,000 in subset b for unique product, social influence, inclination and contentment, and purchase intention. It also formed three identical subsets like less than Rs.30,000 in subset *a;*more than

Rs.50,000 in subset *a,b;* and Rs.30,000 – Rs.50,000 in subset *b* for lifestyle affinity, brand fidelity, and perceived value. For occupation, Tukey HSD post-hoc test created two identical subsets like business in subset a; and retired/others and employed in subset *b* for unique product, social influence, lifestyle affinity, inclination and contentment, perceived value and purchase intention. It also formed three identical subsets like business in subset *a;*retired/others in subset *a,b;* and employed in subset *b* for brand fidelity.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Consumers from diverse socio-economic groups actively engage in the herbal product marketplace. The results indicate that the structural model exhibits a high level of fitness, ensuring precision in evaluating the relationships among distinctive product features, societal influence, lifestyle compatibility, brand allegiance, predisposition and satisfaction, perceived worth, and purchasing intention. The findings reveal that consumer predisposition is negatively associated with distinctive product attributes, suggesting that although product uniqueness differentiates offerings, it does not necessarily elevate consumer satisfaction or preference. Even though advanced formulations and modern technologies attract attention, they do not automatically generate greater predisposition or contentment, underscoring the need for herbal product manufacturers to complement innovation with other consumer-centric strategies.

Consumer choices are profoundly shaped by interpersonal communication, influencer advocacy, expert endorsements, and peer suggestions, emphasizing the powerful role of social influence in purchase behaviour. When trustworthy sources recommend a product, consumers are more inclined to favour it. Likewise, brand allegiance enhances consumer satisfaction and predisposition, as loyal buyers tend to remain committed to brands they trust. Loyalty is reinforced through consistent purchasing patterns, a strong brand image, and positive word-of-mouth, contributing to long-term preference and purchase behaviour. Conversely, lifestyle compatibility has only a minimal effect on predisposition and satisfaction. This indicates that although consumers may value products aligned with their lifestyle, such alignment alone does not necessarily translate into meaningful purchase intention. Broader determinants such as pricing, accessibility, and available substitutes also play critical roles in shaping consumer decisions. The findings also confirm that predisposition and satisfaction exert a substantial influence on purchasing intention, meaning consumers who are satisfied with their choices are more likely to continue buying herbal products.

The results further affirm that societal influence and brand allegiance exert favourable effects, whereas distinctive product attributes and lifestyle compatibility display negative effects on predisposition and satisfaction. Social influence and brand allegiance actively drive consumer preference and purchasing behaviour. Although product uniqueness and lifestyle alignment exhibit limited direct influence,

companies must prioritise trust-building initiatives, influencer partnerships, and transparent communication of product value. Enhancing perceived worth through ethical branding, quality validation, and strategic promotions strengthens consumer trust, ultimately increasing purchase intentions and promoting sustained engagement with herbal products. The mediating role of perceived worth indicates that consumers are more inclined to buy a product when they recognise value in its features, durability, ethical positioning, and cost. Perceived worth also directly shapes purchasing intention, confirming that consumers assess both tangible and intangible benefits during decision-making. Additionally, predisposition and satisfaction have a pronounced positive impact on the purchase intention of herbal products.

Socio-economic determinants—such as age, educational level, monthly income, and occupation—significantly affect distinctive product features, social influence, lifestyle compatibility, brand allegiance, predisposition and satisfaction, perceived worth, and purchase intention. In contrast, gender exhibits no significant influence. Age-specific patterns reveal that middle-aged and older consumers hold different preferences compared to younger individuals. As people age, their priorities shift, leading to varied levels of lifestyle compatibility, predisposition, and satisfaction. Education also shapes perceptions—postgraduates form a distinct category, while school-level and undergraduate consumers share similar viewpoints. Multiple levels of social influence reflect how education enhances product evaluation and purchase propensity.

Income similarly affects purchase behaviour higher-income consumers form a separate group, while lower-income individuals exhibit comparable perceptions. This highlights how financial capacity influences perceived worth and brand commitment. Occupation also plays a role, with business professionals differing from employed or retired individuals, particularly regarding brand allegiance. The findings imply that herbal product marketers must adopt segment-specific strategies that align with the socio-economic profiles of consumers.

RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

The study reveals that perceived value functions as a partial intermediary between consumer inclination and satisfaction and their intention to purchase herbal products. Herbal product marketers should focus on elevating product standards, ensuring transparency in ingredients, and emphasizing associated wellness advantages. Promotional strategies must educate consumers about the authenticity and efficacy of herbal formulations. Efforts to cultivate trust, reinforce ethical branding, and strengthen digital engagement can significantly shape consumer choices. These insights support herbal product marketers in enhancing long-term sales, customer satisfaction, and loyalty, ultimately increasing purchase intentions.

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