



# Assessing the Role of Health Consciousness in Shaping Consumer Purchase Intentions toward Nutraceuticals: A Quantitative Study in the Indian Market

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**Citation:** Ashok Kumar Singh, et.al, (2023) Assessing the Role of Health Consciousness in Shaping Consumer Purchase Intentions toward Nutraceuticals: A Quantitative Study in the Indian Market, *Educational Administration: Theory And Practice*, 29(3), 1093 - 1100  
Doi: 10.53555/kuey.v29i3.8032

## ARTICLE INFO

## ABSTRACT

The nutraceutical market in India has experienced substantial growth, influenced by rising consumer health awareness and the increasing importance of preventive healthcare. This research paper explores the role of health consciousness in determining consumer purchase intentions toward nutraceutical products in India. Through a quantitative methodology, data was collected from 1,200 respondents using stratified sampling techniques, capturing both urban and rural perspectives. The study further examines the mediating role of consumer knowledge and the moderating role of coping mechanisms in this relationship. Demographic variables such as age, income, and education were also analyzed to understand their influence on nutraceutical consumption. The findings indicate that health consciousness strongly predicts purchase intentions, with knowledge amplifying its effect and coping mechanisms playing a vital role in moderating this relationship. Additionally, the results demonstrate that younger, wealthier, and more educated consumers are more likely to purchase nutraceuticals. The implications of the study for marketers, policymakers, and public health advocates are profound, particularly in emerging economies such as India.

**Keywords :** Health Consciousness, Nutraceuticals, Consumer Behavior, Purchase Intentions, India

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background and Research Context

The rising awareness surrounding personal health and wellness has led to significant growth in the global nutraceutical industry. Nutraceuticals, a portmanteau of "nutrition" and "pharmaceutical," refer to foods and supplements that provide health benefits beyond basic nutrition, including disease prevention and health maintenance (Dasgupta, Chatterjee, & Ray, 2021). India, with its diverse population and rapidly changing consumer landscape, has become a key market for nutraceutical products, driven by a combination of rising disposable incomes, increasing urbanization, and growing health consciousness (Jain & Mathur, 2023). The Indian nutraceutical market is projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 21% to reach USD 18 billion by 2025 (Sharma & Kaur, 2022).

Health consciousness, defined as the degree to which individuals are aware of and engage in health-related behaviors, plays a crucial role in influencing consumer behavior, particularly in emerging markets like India (Zhang, Liu, & Zhao, 2022). With a growing focus on preventive healthcare, Indian consumers are increasingly seeking nutraceutical products to enhance their overall well-being and manage lifestyle diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular conditions, and obesity (Singh & Verma, 2022). This shift in consumer behavior highlights the importance of understanding the factors that influence purchase intentions, particularly in relation to health consciousness.

### 1.2 Research Problem

Despite the rapid growth of the nutraceutical market in India, there is a limited understanding of the underlying factors that drive consumer purchase intentions, particularly the role of health consciousness (Patel & Goswami, 2021). While previous studies have explored the relationship between health consciousness and

consumer behavior in Western contexts, research in non-Western markets, such as India, remains underdeveloped (Rao & Sharma, 2023). Moreover, the impact of consumer knowledge and coping mechanisms on nutraceutical purchase behavior is still unclear, particularly in the context of emerging markets where access to health information and coping strategies may differ significantly (Jain & Mathur, 2023).

### 1.3 Research Objectives

The main objectives of this study are as follows:

- To examine the role of health consciousness in shaping consumer purchase intentions toward nutraceuticals in the Indian market.
- To analyze the mediating effect of consumer knowledge on the relationship between health consciousness and purchase intentions.
- To explore the moderating role of coping mechanisms in this relationship.
- To assess the influence of demographic factors such as age, income, and education on nutraceutical consumption patterns.

### 1.4 Significance of the Study

This study addresses a critical gap in the existing literature by providing insights into the role of health consciousness in consumer behavior in a non-Western context. The findings will be valuable to nutraceutical marketers seeking to better understand consumer motivations and design targeted marketing strategies. Additionally, the study offers important implications for public health advocates and policymakers aiming to promote preventive healthcare through consumer education and awareness campaigns (Nguyen, Hwang, & Hong, 2020).

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Overview of the Global and Indian Nutraceutical Market

The global nutraceutical market has been growing steadily, with a current estimated value of USD 382 billion, expected to reach USD 722 billion by 2028 (Smith & Lee, 2022). Key drivers of this growth include increasing consumer demand for functional foods and dietary supplements that offer health benefits beyond basic nutrition (Dasgupta et al., 2021). In India, nutraceuticals are gaining popularity as consumers become more aware of the importance of preventive healthcare and the need to manage lifestyle-related diseases (Rao & Sharma, 2023).

The Indian nutraceutical industry is evolving rapidly, driven by multiple factors such as rising healthcare costs, the prevalence of chronic diseases, and a growing middle-class population (Sharma & Kaur, 2022). According to a recent report, the Indian nutraceutical market is expected to witness a CAGR of 20-25%, making it one of the fastest-growing sectors within the broader health and wellness industry (Jain & Mathur, 2023). As health-conscious consumers increasingly turn to nutraceuticals for their perceived health benefits, it is essential to understand the factors that influence their purchase behavior, particularly in an emerging market like India.

### 2.2 Health Consciousness and Consumer Behaviour

Health consciousness refers to an individual's awareness and concern about their health status, as well as their proactive engagement in behaviours aimed at maintaining or improving health (Nguyen et al., 2020). In the context of nutraceutical consumption, health consciousness is a key predictor of purchase intentions, as health-conscious individuals are more likely to seek out products that align with their health goals (Banerjee, Gupta, & Mukherjee, 2021). Research has shown that health-conscious consumers are more likely to engage in preventive health behaviors, including the consumption of functional foods, dietary supplements, and nutraceuticals (Rao & Sharma, 2023).

Previous studies have also highlighted the role of health consciousness in influencing consumer attitudes toward health-related products (Zhang et al., 2022). Health-conscious consumers are often more informed about the potential benefits of nutraceuticals and are therefore more likely to make informed purchasing decisions (Patel & Goswami, 2021). In this context, health consciousness serves as a critical driver of nutraceutical consumption, particularly in markets where awareness of preventive healthcare is growing rapidly.

### 2.3 Consumer Knowledge and Purchase Intentions

Consumer knowledge plays a crucial role in shaping purchase intentions, particularly in the context of health-related products (Dasgupta et al., 2021). Research has shown that individuals who possess greater knowledge about the benefits and efficacy of nutraceuticals are more likely to incorporate these products into their daily routines (Nguyen et al., 2020). Knowledge enhances consumers' perceived value of nutraceuticals, which in turn increases their likelihood of purchasing such products (Patel & Goswami, 2021).

In emerging markets like India, where access to reliable health information may be limited, consumer knowledge plays an even more critical role in influencing purchase behavior (Rao & Sharma, 2023). Educated consumers are more likely to seek out and understand health-related information, which can lead to higher

levels of trust in nutraceutical products (Singh & Verma, 2022). This study examines the mediating role of consumer knowledge in the relationship between health consciousness and purchase intentions, providing valuable insights into how knowledge influences consumer behavior in the nutraceutical market.

## 2.4 Coping Mechanisms and Health-Related Decision Making

Coping mechanisms refer to the strategies individuals use to manage stress, uncertainty, and health-related risks (Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub, 1989). In the context of health-related decision-making, coping mechanisms play a vital role in shaping how individuals respond to health risks and engage in preventive health behaviors (Jain & Mathur, 2023). Research suggests that individuals with strong coping skills are more likely to adopt proactive health behaviors, including the consumption of nutraceuticals, as they feel more confident in managing potential health risks (Patel & Goswami, 2021).

Previous studies have also highlighted the moderating role of coping mechanisms in the relationship between health consciousness and health-related behaviors (Nguyen et al., 2020). This study examines how coping mechanisms influence the relationship between health consciousness and nutraceutical purchase intentions, providing insights into the psychological factors that drive consumer behavior in the nutraceutical market.

## 2.5 Demographic Factors and Nutraceutical Consumption:

Demographic factors such as age, income, education, and geographic location play a significant role in shaping consumer behavior in the nutraceutical market (Rao & Sharma, 2023). Younger consumers, particularly millennials and Generation Z, are more likely to adopt health-conscious behaviors due to their increased exposure to health information through digital platforms (Banerjee et al., 2021). In contrast, older consumers may be more motivated by the need to manage chronic health conditions, leading to different purchasing patterns (Nguyen et al., 2020).

Income and education levels also play a crucial role in influencing consumer behavior, as higher-income and more educated consumers are more likely to have access to reliable health information and nutraceutical products (Zhang et al., 2022). This study examines the influence of demographic factors on nutraceutical consumption, providing valuable insights into how different consumer segments engage with nutraceutical products in the Indian market.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative, cross-sectional research design, which is well-suited for analyzing consumer attitudes and behaviors related to nutraceuticals within a specified timeframe. The design allows for the examination of how variables such as health consciousness, consumer knowledge, and coping mechanisms influence purchase intentions. The primary focus of the research was to establish the direct, indirect, and moderating relationships between these variables, using a structured questionnaire to gather data.

The structured survey instrument was developed to measure these key constructs through established scales, thus ensuring the validity and reliability of the results. The decision to use a quantitative methodology stems from the need to statistically test hypotheses and generalize findings across the Indian population. This approach provides insights into broader consumer behaviors and trends in nutraceutical consumption, which is critical in a market as diverse as India.

Given that the research involves multiple variables influencing consumer behavior, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed. This method is particularly useful when exploring complex relationships among variables, allowing the study to simultaneously assess both measurement models (the relationship between observed and latent variables) and structural models (the relationships among latent variables).

### 3.2 Population and Sampling

The target population for this study consists of adult consumers in India who have either purchased or shown interest in nutraceutical products. Since the Indian nutraceutical market serves both urban and rural consumers, it was crucial to capture this diversity through stratified random sampling. This technique ensures that different demographic segments, particularly in terms of age, income, education, and geographical location (urban vs. rural), are proportionately represented.

**Sample Size:** The study drew on a sample size of 1,200 respondents, which was determined using Cochran's formula for sample size calculation. This formula helps ensure that the sample size is large enough to achieve statistical significance and provide reliable results. A sample size of 1,200 respondents was deemed adequate to detect significant patterns and trends in nutraceutical purchase behavior while maintaining a high level of statistical power.

**Stratified Sampling:** The sample was stratified based on four key demographic factors:

Age (18-30, 31-50, 51-65),

Income (low-income: <INR 50,000, middle-income: INR 50,000-100,000, and high-income: >INR 100,000),

Education (high school, bachelor's degree, master's degree, PhD), and Location (urban vs rural).

This stratification allowed the study to capture differences in purchase behavior across diverse consumer groups. Urban respondents, for instance, are generally expected to have higher exposure to marketing and better access to health-related products, while rural respondents may face different challenges, such as limited access to healthcare resources.

### 3.3 Data Collection

Data collection was conducted using a structured questionnaire, which was designed to gather information on respondents' demographic details, levels of health consciousness, consumer knowledge, coping mechanisms, and purchase intentions. The questionnaire was distributed through both online platforms and face-to-face interviews, particularly in rural areas where internet penetration is lower. This hybrid approach ensured that the study reached a broad cross-section of the population, minimizing potential biases from relying on a single method of data collection.

**Survey Instrument:** The questionnaire comprised five sections:

- **Demographic Information:** Questions on age, gender, income, education, and geographical location.
- **Health Consciousness:** Measured using a five-point Likert scale, with items such as "I regularly seek information on health topics" and "I am concerned about my health and well-being."
- **Consumer Knowledge:** Items assessed respondents' familiarity with nutraceuticals, including their perceived benefits and how they are used for preventive healthcare.
- **Coping Mechanisms:** This section used statements such as "I manage stress by focusing on health-related behaviors" to assess how respondents deal with health-related stressors.
- **Purchase Intentions:** Questions related to the likelihood of purchasing nutraceuticals, e.g., "I intend to purchase nutraceuticals in the future to maintain my health."
- **Response Format:** All responses were captured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This format allowed for nuanced responses and enabled the use of advanced statistical techniques in data analysis.

### 3.4 Measures

The study utilized validated scales from the literature to measure key constructs, ensuring both reliability and validity. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess internal consistency, and Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were computed to evaluate convergent validity.

**Health Consciousness:** Measured using a scale adapted from Gould (1990), which assesses the extent to which individuals are aware of and concerned about their health. Sample items include: "I am very conscious of my health" and "I make efforts to stay informed about health issues."

**Consumer Knowledge:** A scale adapted from previous studies on consumer behavior and health products was used. Items such as "I know how to differentiate high-quality nutraceutical products from others" were included to gauge respondents' knowledge levels.

**Coping Mechanisms:** This was measured using a subset of items from the Coping Strategies Inventory (Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub, 1989). The items evaluated respondents' ability to manage health-related stress and risks, with statements like "I can effectively manage health-related anxiety."

**Purchase Intentions:** Items assessing purchase intentions were adapted from Fishbein and Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (1975), with respondents rating their agreement with statements like "I am likely to purchase nutraceuticals to maintain my health."

### 3.5 Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the relationships between variables.

**Descriptive Statistics:** Mean, median, standard deviations, and frequencies were calculated to provide an overview of the demographic characteristics of respondents, as well as their levels of health consciousness, consumer knowledge, and purchase intentions.

**Correlation Analysis:** Pearson's correlation was employed to examine the relationships between health consciousness, consumer knowledge, coping mechanisms, and purchase intentions. This helped to identify which variables were most strongly associated with consumers' intention to purchase nutraceuticals.

**PLS-SEM (Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling):** PLS-SEM was used to test the study's hypotheses. This method allowed for the simultaneous analysis of the measurement model (to confirm the validity and reliability of the scales) and the structural model (to assess the relationships between variables). Bootstrapping was performed to determine the significance of path coefficients and assess the strength of the hypothesized relationships.

**Mediation and Moderation Analysis:** The mediating effect of consumer knowledge on the relationship between health consciousness and purchase intentions was tested using Hayes' Process Model in SPSS, while moderation analysis was conducted to evaluate whether coping mechanisms moderated the effect of health consciousness on purchase intentions.

**ANOVA (Analysis of Variance):** One-way ANOVA was conducted to analyze the influence of demographic factors such as age, income, and education on nutraceutical consumption. Post-hoc analyses using the Games-Howell test were employed to identify statistically significant differences between demographic groups.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The demographic analysis provided insights into the composition of the sample, highlighting key differences across various consumer segments.

**Age Distribution:** Respondents were evenly distributed across the age groups, with 35% aged between 18 and 30 years, 40% between 31 and 50 years, and 25% over 50 years. This distribution reflects the growing interest in health and wellness among younger consumers, while also capturing the purchasing behavior of older consumers who may be managing chronic health conditions.

**Income:** Nearly 45% of respondents fell within the middle-income bracket (INR 50,000 to INR 100,000), indicating a significant portion of nutraceutical consumers come from this socio-economic class. Low-income consumers (<INR 50,000) represented 30% of the sample, while high-income consumers (>INR 100,000) comprised 25%.

**Education:** A majority of respondents (50%) held at least a bachelor's degree, with 30% having completed a master's degree. This reflects the association between higher education levels and increased awareness of health-related products, including nutraceuticals.

**Geographical Location:** As anticipated, 70% of the respondents were from urban areas, while 30% were from rural regions. The higher representation from urban areas aligns with the greater availability of health products and higher exposure to health-related information in these regions.

**Table 1: Demographic Statistics of Respondents**

Demographic Factor	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	18-30	420	35%
	31-50	480	40%
	51-65	300	25%
Income	< 50K	360	30%
	50K-100K	540	45%
	> 100K	300	25%
Education	High School	180	15%
	Bachelors	600	50%
	Masters	360	30%
	PhD	60	5%
Location	Urban	840	70%
	Rural	360	30%

The table shown above provides a detailed breakdown of the demographic statistics of the respondents in the sample. This demographic distribution provides insights into the various segments of the Indian population, ensuring that the study's findings reflect a wide range of consumer behaviours across different socio-economic backgrounds.



## 4.2 Correlation Analysis

**Table 2: Correlation Matrix of Key Variables**

Variable	Health Consciousness	Consumer Knowledge	Coping Mechanisms	Purchase Intentions
Health Consciousness	1.00	0.51	0.44	0.62
Consumer Knowledge	0.51	1.00	0.49	0.57
Coping Mechanisms	0.44	0.49	1.00	0.50
Purchase Intentions	0.62	0.57	0.50	1.00

The correlation matrix highlights significant relationships between key variables. As hypothesized, health consciousness is strongly and positively correlated with purchase intentions ( $r = 0.62$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This indicates that individuals with greater awareness and concern for their health are more likely to purchase nutraceuticals. Similarly, consumer knowledge was also positively correlated with purchase intentions ( $r = 0.57$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), suggesting that consumers who are well-informed about the benefits and uses of nutraceuticals are more inclined to purchase them.

Coping mechanisms, which were measured as a moderating factor, showed a moderate positive correlation with both health consciousness ( $r = 0.44$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and purchase intentions ( $r = 0.50$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This indicates that individuals who effectively manage health-related stress are more likely to act on their health consciousness by purchasing nutraceutical products.

## 4.3 Mediation and Moderation Analysis

**Table 3: Mediation and Moderation Analysis Results**

Path	$\beta$ (Standardized Coefficient)	p-value	Significance
Health Consciousness $\rightarrow$ Purchase Intentions	0.62	$< 0.01$	Significant
Health Consciousness $\rightarrow$ Consumer Knowledge $\rightarrow$ Purchase Intentions	0.41	$< 0.01$	Significant
Health Consciousness $\times$ Coping Mechanisms $\rightarrow$ Purchase Intentions	0.35	$< 0.05$	Significant

**Mediation Analysis:** The mediation analysis tested the indirect effect of consumer knowledge on the relationship between health consciousness and purchase intentions. The standardized coefficient for the indirect path was 0.41 ( $p < 0.01$ ), indicating that consumer knowledge significantly mediates the relationship. This means that individuals with higher health consciousness are likely to be more knowledgeable about nutraceutical products, and this knowledge, in turn, increases their intention to purchase these products.

**Moderation Analysis:** The moderation analysis examined whether coping mechanisms influence the strength of the relationship between health consciousness and purchase intentions. The results show a significant moderating effect ( $\beta = 0.35$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), meaning that individuals with stronger coping mechanisms

are more likely to translate their health consciousness into actual purchasing behavior. This suggests that consumers who are confident in managing health risks are more proactive in purchasing health products like nutraceuticals.

#### 4.4 ANOVA Results

**Table 4: One-way ANOVA for Demographic Factors and Nutraceutical Consumption**

Demographic Factor	F-Value	p-value	Significance
Age	4.27	< 0.01	Significant
Income	5.36	< 0.01	Significant
Education	4.89	< 0.01	Significant
Location (Urban vs Rural)	2.10	0.06	Not Significant

The ANOVA results provide insights into how different demographic factors affect nutraceutical consumption patterns

**Age:** The F-value of 4.27 ( $p < 0.01$ ) indicates significant differences in nutraceutical consumption across different age groups, with younger consumers (aged 18-30) being more likely to purchase nutraceutical products than older age groups.

**Income:** The F-value of 5.36 ( $p < 0.01$ ) reveals significant variations based on income, with higher-income groups (earning over INR 100,000) demonstrating greater purchase intentions.

**Education:** The F-value of 4.89 ( $p < 0.01$ ) suggests that education plays a significant role, as respondents with higher education levels (Bachelor's and above) were more likely to purchase nutraceuticals.

**Location:** The p-value for the location factor (urban vs rural) was 0.06, slightly above the 0.05 significance threshold, indicating no significant difference between urban and rural consumers in terms of their purchase intentions toward nutraceuticals.

### 5. Discussion

#### 5.1 Interpretation of Findings

The findings of this study support the hypothesis that health consciousness plays a critical role in shaping consumer purchase intentions toward nutraceutical products in the Indian market. The strong correlation between health consciousness and purchase intentions ( $r = 0.62$ ) reinforces the idea that consumers who are more aware of their health are likely to engage in proactive behaviors, such as purchasing nutraceuticals.

The study also reveals that consumer knowledge significantly mediates this relationship. Consumers with higher health consciousness tend to possess greater knowledge about nutraceutical products, and this knowledge further amplifies their likelihood of purchasing these products. This finding suggests that educational campaigns promoting the benefits of nutraceuticals could have a positive impact on consumer behavior.

The moderation analysis highlights the importance of coping mechanisms in influencing how health-conscious consumers translate their awareness into purchasing behavior. Consumers with strong coping strategies are more likely to act on their health consciousness, as they feel more confident in managing health-related risks. This insight is crucial for marketers, who can tailor their messaging to emphasize the role of nutraceuticals in managing health stressors effectively.

#### 5.2 Implications for Marketers and Policymakers

For marketers, these findings underscore the importance of targeted marketing strategies that appeal to health-conscious consumers, particularly those in younger, wealthier, and more educated segments. Marketing campaigns should emphasize the health benefits of nutraceuticals, providing clear, reliable information to educate consumers about the value of these products.

For policymakers, the results highlight the need for increased consumer education and awareness campaigns around nutraceuticals. Public health initiatives that promote the benefits of preventive healthcare and the role of nutraceuticals can play a critical role in improving health outcomes in India.

## 6. Conclusion

This study provides important insights into how health consciousness influences consumer purchase intentions toward nutraceutical products in India. By exploring the mediating role of consumer knowledge and the moderating role of coping mechanisms, the research contributes to a deeper understanding of the psychological factors driving nutraceutical consumption. These findings have significant implications for both marketers and public health advocates, particularly in emerging markets like India, where preventive healthcare is gaining prominence.

Future research should consider additional factors such as social influences and cultural perceptions, which may further impact consumer behavior in the nutraceutical market. Longitudinal studies could also provide valuable insights into how consumer behavior evolves over time as health awareness continues to rise in India.

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