



International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology
Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435 (Online) Volume 15, Issue 05, May 2026)

A Study on Product Innovation & Competitive Advantage of Himalaya Wellness in Chennai

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Abstract– The growing shift towards natural and holistic wellness has transformed consumer preferences, making herbal and Ayurvedic products increasingly relevant in today's market. In this context, the present study explores the role of product innovation in shaping the competitive advantage of Himalaya Wellness, while also examining customer preference towards the brand. The research aims to understand how innovation strategies, brand positioning, and consumer perceptions collectively influence Himalaya's standing in comparison to emerging organic startups. Primary data was collected from 115 respondents using a structured questionnaire, and statistical tools such as percentage analysis, correlation, regression, chi-square, and reliability analysis were applied to derive meaningful insights.

The findings reveal that Himalaya Wellness is strongly perceived as an innovative and trustworthy brand, with product innovation significantly influencing both customer preference and competitive advantage. Statistical results indicate a strong positive relationship between product innovation and competitive advantage ($r = 0.808$), with regression analysis showing that innovation explains 65.3% of the variation in competitive positioning. Consumers predominantly prefer the brand due to its herbal and natural ingredients, safety, and effectiveness, while factors such as distribution strength and brand credibility further reinforce its market leadership. Overall, the study concludes that continuous innovation, supported by strong brand equity and consumer trust, is the key driver behind Himalaya Wellness's sustained success in the competitive herbal and wellness industry

Keywords– Product Innovation, Himalaya Wellness, Competitive Advantage, Customer Preference, Herbal Products, Brand Trust

I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of wellness refers to the overall fulfilment of an individual's needs, ranging from basic physical health, nutrition, and exercise to higher-level aspects such as beauty, social lifestyle, mental clarity, and spiritual well-being. Mental peace enables individuals to think logically, while spiritual well-being helps in understanding right from wrong. In recent years, the approach to wellness has shifted

from being reactive to proactive, where individuals actively invest in maintaining and improving their health and lifestyle.

In India, Ayurveda, health foods, tonics, and natural remedies have traditionally been integral to daily life. However, modern consumers are now exploring new dimensions of wellness, including fitness routines, massage therapies, and lifestyle counselling. This evolving trend reflects a growing awareness and willingness among consumers to adopt holistic wellness practices. The Indian wellness industry has witnessed significant growth, with the market estimated at INR 1,10,000 crore and expanding at a rate of 13–15 per cent annually. Segments such as rejuvenation and alternative therapies are growing rapidly, contributing to employment generation and economic development.

Organisations such as FICCI have played a vital role in promoting the wellness sector by collaborating with stakeholders, developing industry standards, and enhancing quality through initiatives with institutions like NABH. The wellness market is broadly segmented into hygiene, preventive, curative, and enhancement needs, highlighting the diverse expectations of modern consumers.

Within this expanding industry, Himalaya Wellness has emerged as a leading global healthcare brand. Founded in 1930 by M. Manal, the company was built on the vision of utilising herbal remedies to improve health and well-being. By integrating Ayurveda with modern scientific research, Himalaya has successfully developed a wide range of innovative products catering to healthcare and personal care needs. Today, the brand operates in over 100 countries and offers nearly 500 products, with several formulations recommended by healthcare professionals worldwide.

Himalaya's philosophy of "Happiness through Wellness" reflects its commitment to delivering safe, effective, and natural solutions to consumers. Its continuous focus on product innovation, quality, and customer-centric offerings has strengthened its position in the competitive wellness market. However, the rise of organic startups and increasing consumer expectations have intensified competition, making it essential to evaluate Himalaya's innovation strategies and market position. In this context, the present study aims to

analyse the product innovation strategies of Himalaya Wellness, examine its competitive advantage over organic brands, and understand customer preferences for its products, particularly in the Chennai region.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The rapid growth of the herbal and wellness industry has led to increased competition among established brands and emerging organic startups. Consumers today are more health-conscious and prefer products that are natural, safe, and effective. This shift in consumer behaviour has created a dynamic market environment where companies must continuously innovate to remain competitive. Himalaya Wellness, a well-established brand in the herbal product segment, faces growing competition from organic startups that offer specialised and premium products. These new entrants often attract customers through niche positioning, unique branding, and targeted marketing strategies. As a result, maintaining customer preference and market share has become a significant challenge for established brands like Himalaya.

Another important concern is the gap between product innovation and customer perception. While Himalaya invests in research and development and introduces new products, it is essential to understand whether consumers actually recognise and value these innovations. Customer perception plays a crucial role in determining brand preference and purchase decisions. Additionally, factors such as pricing, availability, brand trust, and product effectiveness influence consumer choice in the wellness market. With multiple alternatives available, customers can easily switch brands, making loyalty less stable and more dependent on perceived value. Therefore, this study aims to analyse the product innovation strategies of Himalaya Wellness, examine its competitive position relative to organic startups, and understand customer preferences for its products in the Chennai region.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- **Consumer Behaviour towards Ayurvedic Products in India – NS, Sneha & Reddy (2024)** - The study examines consumer perception and behaviour towards Ayurvedic products in India. It highlights that trust and authenticity are major concerns among consumers. Many users are unsure about whether products are truly natural. The research also emphasises the role of quality assurance. It concludes that brand credibility significantly influences purchase decisions.
- **A study on the consumer behaviour for ayurvedic products with special reference to consumers in Kolkata– P Dhar, S Dey (2019)** - Customers' perception towards the Ayurvedic products is investigated. The growth and demand for the market is studied. It is generally a study of the behaviour of consumers in the growing interest towards Ayurvedic products that is leading to be emerging sector in the medicine industry and leading to sustainable growth of the industry.
- **Factors Influencing Buying Behaviour of Ayurvedic Products – A Review – Bharathi & Mayya (2022)** - This review identifies key factors affecting buying behaviour. Trust, safety, and natural ingredients are major determinants. Consumers associate Ayurveda with fewer side effects. Brand reliability also influences decisions. The study concludes that trust converts into purchase intention.
- **A Study on Relationship between Consumer Behaviour and Marketing Mix of Ayurvedic Products – MS Agarwal, P Thomas (2024)** - This study examines the link between marketing strategies and consumer behaviour. It highlights the importance of product, price, place, and promotion. Marketing mix elements influence buying decisions significantly. Consumers respond positively to effective branding. It concludes that strategic marketing enhances sales.
- **A Study on Female Customer Satisfaction on Hair Oil and Beauty Cream with Special Reference to Himalaya Products in Coimbatore District – A. Saravanakumar, Santhosh Kumar Bojan (2018)** - This study examines factors influencing consumer preference. It found that natural ingredients, quality, and effectiveness drive purchase decisions. Consumers show high satisfaction with skincare and healthcare products. The study also highlights strong brand loyalty. It concludes that Himalaya products are widely preferred due to trust and performance.
- **A Study on Marketing Strategies and SWOC Analysis of Himalaya Wellness Private Ltd – Bharathi & Mayya (2022)** - This study evaluates the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges of Himalaya Wellness. It highlights strong brand reputation and product quality as key strengths. The company's use of modern technology with Ayurveda enhances innovation. Marketing strategies and product diversification contribute to growth. It concludes that Himalaya maintains a strong competitive position in the herbal market.
- **Customer Satisfaction towards Himalaya Products – Shreekarthika, & Gowri, P (2019)** - This study analyses customer satisfaction towards Himalaya products using primary data. It found that most consumers are satisfied with quality, safety, and

effectiveness. Brand trust and product performance strongly influence customer loyalty. The study also highlights the role of availability in purchase decisions. It concludes that Himalaya has a strong positive brand image but needs better promotional strategies.

- **Factors Governing Consumers' Buying Behaviour Concerning Nutraceutical Products – Jadhav et al. (2023)** - This study examines factors influencing consumer behaviour towards nutraceutical and wellness products. It found that health awareness and lifestyle changes strongly impact purchase decisions. Consumers prefer products that provide preventive health benefits. The study also highlights the role of information and education. It concludes that awareness and perceived health benefits drive consumer preference.
- **A Study of Consumer Perception of Herbal Products in Bhopal – Md. Irshad Ali, Manmohan Yadav (2015)** - The study on consumer perception of herbal products in Bhopal, with focus on Vindhya Herbal, found that most consumers prefer herbal products because they are natural, chemical-free, and have minimal side effects. Usage is regular, with daily consumption and monthly purchase patterns.
- **Green marketing mix: A review of literature and direction for future research–Kumar & Ghodeswar (2015)** - The study analyses the impact of green marketing. It found that eco-friendly branding influences consumer decisions. Consumers prefer products with environmental benefits. Awareness campaigns improve perception. It concludes that green marketing enhances purchase intention.
- **Exploring purchasing patterns for herbal products: an investigation into green consumer behaviour–Nedheera & MJ (2024)** - This study focuses on how people are changing their shopping habits to be more eco-friendly, especially by choosing herbal products. These products are thought to be better for both health and the environment compared to regular ones.
- **The Chain of Effects from Brand Trust and Brand Affect to Brand Performance: The Role of Brand Loyalty – Chaudhuri & Holbrook (2001)** - This study examines the relationship between brand trust, brand affect, and overall brand performance. It found that brand trust and emotional attachment significantly influence customer loyalty. Loyal customers are more likely to engage in repeat purchases. The study highlights that trust reduces perceived risk in buying decisions. It concludes that brand trust and loyalty are key drivers of brand success.

- **Dynamic Capabilities and Competitive Advantages as Mediator Variables between Market Orientation and Business Performance – Correia, Dias & Teixeira (2020)** - This study examines how dynamic capabilities and competitive advantage influence business performance. It found that firms with strong market orientation achieve better results through innovation and adaptability. Competitive advantage acts as a mediator between strategy and performance outcomes. The research highlights the importance of responding to changing customer needs. It concludes that dynamic capabilities strengthen long-term competitiveness.
- **Empirical Study of Factors Influencing Consumers' Buying Behaviour of Ayurvedic Skin Care Products - RK Nair, J Kharade, & KR Jayalekshmi (2018)** - Research highlights female customers have more inclination than males for ayurvedic skin care products. Significant correlation exists between income levels and the buying behaviour of Ayurvedic skin care products. Working Professionals more influenced. The study is of great importance to Ayurvedic companies to understand the scope of online shopping behavior for consumers. There is tremendous scope for the growth of Ayurveda products both in rural and urban areas.

IV. OBJECTIVES

- To study the product innovation strategies of Himalaya Wellness.
- To analyse how Himalaya Wellness competes with organic startups.
- To understand customer preference for Himalaya Wellness products over emerging organic brands.

V. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

1. With the increasing competition in the herbal and wellness industry, product innovation has become a key factor in gaining a competitive advantage. In this context, the present study focuses on analysing how Himalaya Wellness uses product innovation to strengthen its market position. It also examines how innovative products influence customer perception and brand preference. The study highlights the role of innovation in sustaining competitive advantage.
2. To achieve this, the study covers important aspects such as product innovation strategies, differentiation, and competitive positioning of Himalaya Wellness. It includes variables like product quality, safety, effectiveness, brand trust, pricing, and value for money. The scope is restricted to understanding how these factors contribute to the company's competitive

advantage. It also evaluates how Himalaya competes with other herbal and organic brands.

3. The empirical analysis is based on primary data collected through structured questionnaires using Likert - scale measurements. The study focuses on consumer responses related to innovation, competition, and preference towards Himalaya products. It is limited to selected variables, a specific sample size, and a defined time period. Therefore, the scope ensures a focused analysis of the relationship between product innovation and competitive advantage.

VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive research design, which is suitable for analysing product innovation and the competitive advantage of Himalaya Wellness. This design helps in understanding customer perceptions, preferences, and attitudes towards herbal products. It also enables the study of factors such as product quality, brand trust, pricing, and innovation strategies without manipulating any variables. The design provides a clear understanding of the relationship between innovation and competitive positioning.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The study was conducted with a sample size of 115 respondents, representing consumers who use or are aware of Himalaya Wellness products in Chennai. A convenience sampling technique was adopted, where respondents were selected based on their availability and willingness to participate. This method was chosen due to ease of access and time constraints. It ensures quick data collection while capturing relevant consumer insights within the Chennai region.

Data Collection Method

Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire consisting of Likert-scale and multiple-choice questions related to product innovation, competitive factors, and customer preference. The responses were collected from consumers residing in Chennai. Secondary data was gathered from research journals, articles, company reports, and online sources related to herbal products and the wellness industry. The collected data helps in analysing consumer behaviour and evaluating Himalaya's competitive advantage.

Statistical Tools Used

1. Reliability Analysis (Cronbach's Alpha): Used to assess the internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire. The Cronbach's alpha values indicate

that the scales used for product innovation, competitive advantage, and customer preference are reliable and suitable for analysis.

2. Percentage Analysis: Used to calculate and interpret the distribution of responses across demographic variables and opinion-based questions related to product innovation, competitive advantage, and customer preference. This method facilitates easy comparison and understanding of response patterns.
3. Correlation Analysis: Applied to examine the relationship between key variables such as product innovation, customer preference, and competitive advantage. It helps in identifying the strength and direction of association between these variables.
4. Regression Analysis: Used to determine the impact of product innovation on the competitive advantage of Himalaya Wellness. This analysis measures the extent to which innovation influences the brand's competitive positioning.
5. Chi-Square Test: Used to examine the association between categorical variables, such as gender and the primary reason for choosing Himalaya Wellness products. It helps in understanding whether demographic factors influence consumer preferences.

The collected data were classified, tabulated, and analysed using the above statistical tools. The results were presented in the form of tables and interpreted accordingly to draw meaningful conclusions regarding product innovation, competitive advantage, and customer preference towards Himalaya Wellness.

VII. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE I RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

Scale	Variable Name	No of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
1	Product Innovation	5	0.824	Good
2	Competitive Advantage	5	0.837	Good
3	Customer Preference	5	0.85	Good
	Computed Variables	3	0.922	Excellent

The reliability analysis indicates that all three scales demonstrate strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values of 0.824 for product innovation, 0.837 for competitive advantage, and 0.850 for customer preference.

These values fall within the “good” reliability range, confirming that the items within each scale are consistent and reliable. Furthermore, the overall computed variables show an excellent reliability score of 0.922, indicating a high level of overall consistency in the measurement model. Hence, the questionnaire is considered highly reliable for the study.

PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

TABLE II: AGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

Age	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Below 18	6	5.2%
18-25	52	45.2%
26-35	10	8.7%
36-45	16	13.9%
Above 45	31	27%
Total	115	100%

Interpretation

The age distribution of the 115 respondents reveals a predominantly young consumer base, with nearly half of the participants (45.2%) falling within the 18-25 age bracket. When combined with the "Below 18" category, over 50% of the sample represents a youth demographic, highlighting the brand's strong resonance with Gen Z and students. In contrast, the 26-35 and 36-45 age groups show relatively lower participation at 8.7% and 13.9% respectively, suggesting a potential mid-career market gap. Interestingly, there is a significant resurgence in the "Above 45" category, which accounts for 27% of the total, indicating that while the brand is highly popular among the youth, it also maintains a solid foundation of trust among older, more established consumers.

TABLE III: GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male	37	32.2%
Female	75	65.2%
Prefer not to say	3	2.6%
Total	115	100%

Interpretation

The data shows that a majority of respondents are female (65.2%), followed by male respondents (32.2%), with a small proportion (2.6%) preferring not to disclose their

gender. In the context of the study, this indicates that perceptions regarding Himalaya Wellness products are largely influenced by female consumers, who are typically more engaged in personal care and wellness product usage. This distribution suggests that the findings of the study may strongly reflect female consumer preferences and attitudes towards product innovation and brand choice.

TABLE 4: OCCUPATION DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

Occupation	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Student	50	43.5%
Working Professional	26	22.6%
Self-Employed	11	9.6%
Homemaker	13	11.3%
Others	15	13%
Total	115	100%

Interpretation

The data indicates that a majority of respondents are students, accounting for 43.5%, followed by working professionals at 22.6%. Smaller proportions include homemakers (11.3%), others (13%), and self-employed individuals (9.6%). In the context of the study, this suggests that the findings are largely influenced by younger consumers, particularly students, who may have greater awareness and inclination towards herbal and wellness products. This distribution highlights the relevance of Himalaya Wellness among the youth segment and reflects their role in shaping perceptions of product innovation and brand preference.

TABLE V: PRIMARY REASON FOR CHOOSING HIMALAYA WELLNESS

Factors	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Herbal/Natural Ingredients	65	56.5%
Brand Reputation	15	13%
Price	10	8.7%
Effectiveness	11	9.6%
Availability	14	12.2%
Total	115	100%

Interpretation

The data shows that a majority of respondents (56.5%) choose Himalaya Wellness primarily due to its herbal and natural ingredients, making it the most influential factor. Other factors, such as brand reputation (13%), availability (12.2%), effectiveness (9.6%), and price (8.7%), have comparatively lower influence. In the context of the study, this indicates that Himalaya's strong positioning as a natural and Ayurvedic brand plays a crucial role in driving consumer preference and supports its product innovation and competitive advantage in the market.

TABLE VI: HIMALAYA WELLNESS CAN BE DESCRIBED AS A BRAND THAT CONSISTENTLY INVESTS IN PRODUCT INNOVATION.

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Disagree	7	6%
Neutral	34	29.6%
Agree	56	48.7%
Strongly Agree	18	15.7%
Total	115	100%

Interpretation

The responses indicate a strong positive perception of Himalaya Wellness in terms of product innovation, with 34.8% agreeing and 19.1% strongly agreeing that the brand frequently launches new products, while 36.5% remain neutral. A higher level of agreement is observed in the integration of Ayurveda with modern technology, where 49.6% agree and 14.8% strongly agree, with 28.7% neutral. Similarly, 41.7% agree, and 15.7% strongly agree that the products are innovative and differentiated, and the same percentage reflects noticeable product improvements, with 33.9% neutral responses. Additionally, 48.7% agree, and 15.7% strongly agree that Himalaya consistently invests in innovation, while 29.6% remain neutral, indicating overall positive perception with moderate awareness.

TABLE VII: HIMALAYA WELLNESS IS BETTER POSITIONED TO COMPETE WITH ORGANIC STARTUPS IN THE HERBAL AND NATURAL PRODUCTS SEGMENT

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Disagree	8	7%
Neutral	32	27.8%
Agree	56	48.7%
Strongly Agree	19	16.5%
Total	115	100%

Interpretation

The data shows that a majority of respondents perceive Himalaya Wellness as having a strong competitive advantage, with around 60% agreeing that it offers a more comprehensive product portfolio. Approximately 68% of respondents acknowledge its strong distribution network as a key strength, while 59.2% agree that its pricing is competitive and value-oriented. Furthermore, 62.6% of respondents recognise Himalaya's brand credibility as a superior factor compared to organic startups, and 65.2% believe it is better positioned in the herbal segment. The low level of disagreement (ranging between 6.1% and 8.7%) indicates a consistent and favourable perception of its competitive standing.

Table VIII: Given a choice between Himalaya Wellness and other organic brands, I am more likely to select Himalaya products.

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	2	1.7%
Disagree	6	5.2%
Neutral	42	36.5%
Agree	43	37.4%
Strongly Agree	22	19.1%
Total	115	100%

Interpretation

The responses reflect a positive consumer preference towards Himalaya Wellness products, with 60.9% preferring the brand due to its safety and Ayurvedic foundation, while 27.8% remain neutral. Around 60% of respondents indicate that past product performance influences their preference, with only 9.6% expressing disagreement. Additionally, 57.4% agree that Himalaya offers better value for money, while 35.7% remain neutral. Professional recommendations influence 54.8% of respondents, with 31.3% neutral, and 56.5% state they are more likely to choose Himalaya over other brands, while 36.5% remain neutral, indicating a generally favourable but moderately varied consumer preference.

CORRELATION ANALYSIS:

Product Innovation and Customer Preference

Null Hypothesis (H0):

There is no significant relationship between product innovation and customer preference towards Himalaya Wellness products.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1):

There is a significant relationship between product innovation and customer preference towards Himalaya Wellness products.

TABLE IX: PRODUCT INNOVATION AND CUSTOMER PREFERENCE

Pearson's Correlations		
		Pearson's r
Product Innovation	Customer Preference	0.791

Interpretation

The Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.791$) indicates a strong positive relationship between product innovation and customer preference towards Himalaya Wellness products. This suggests that higher levels of perceived innovation are associated with increased customer preference. Therefore, product innovation plays a significant role in influencing consumer choice and brand preference. Since the correlation coefficient ($r = 0.791$) indicates a strong positive relationship, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted.

There is no significant relationship between product innovation and Himalaya Wellness's competitive advantage.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1):

There is a significant relationship between product innovation and the competitive advantage of Himalaya Wellness.

Table 10: Product Innovation and Competitive Advantage

Pearson's Correlations		
		Pearson's r
Product Innovation	Competitive Advantage	0.808

Interpretation

The Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.808$) indicates a strong positive relationship between product innovation and the competitive advantage of Himalaya Wellness. This implies that higher levels of product innovation are associated with greater competitive advantage. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted, confirming a significant relationship between the variables.

REGRESSION ANALYSIS:

Product innovation is considered the independent variable, while competitive advantage is treated as the dependent variable to examine the impact of innovation on the competitive positioning of Himalaya Wellness.

Table 11: Regression Analysis – Product Innovation and Competitive Advantage

Variables	R Square (R ²)	Beta	Significance (p-value)
Product Innovation – Competitive Advantage	0.653	0.808	0.000

Interpretation

The regression results indicate that product innovation has a strong and significant impact on the competitive advantage of Himalaya Wellness. The R^2 value of 0.653 shows that 65.3% of the variation in competitive advantage is explained by product innovation. The beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.808$) reflects a strong positive influence of product innovation on competitive advantage.

Additionally, the significance value ($p = 0.000$) is less than 0.05, confirming that the model is statistically significant.

Customer Preference and Competitive Advantage

Null Hypothesis (H0):

There is no significant relationship between customer preference and the competitive advantage of Himalaya Wellness.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1):

There is a significant relationship between customer preference and the competitive advantage of Himalaya Wellness.

TABLE X: CUSTOMER PREFERENCE AND COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Pearson's Correlations		
		Pearson's r
Customer Preference	Competitive Advantage	0.795

Interpretation

The Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.795$) indicates a strong positive relationship between customer preference and the competitive advantage of Himalaya Wellness. This suggests that higher customer preference is associated with greater competitive advantage. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted, confirming a significant relationship between the variables.

2. Product Innovation and Competitive Advantage

Null Hypothesis (H0):

There is no significant relationship between product innovation and Himalaya Wellness's competitive advantage.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1):

There is a significant relationship between product innovation and the competitive advantage of Himalaya Wellness.

TABLE XI: PRODUCT INNOVATION AND COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Pearson's Correlations		
		Pearson's r
Product Innovation	Competitive Advantage	0.808

Interpretation

The Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.808$) indicates a strong positive relationship between product innovation and the competitive advantage of Himalaya Wellness. This implies that higher levels of product innovation are associated with greater competitive advantage. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted, confirming a significant relationship between the variables.

REGRESSION ANALYSIS:

Product innovation is considered the independent variable, while competitive advantage is treated as the dependent variable to examine the impact of innovation on the competitive positioning of Himalaya Wellness.

TABLE XII: REGRESSION ANALYSIS – PRODUCT INNOVATION AND COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Variables	R Square (R ²)	Beta	Significance (p-value)
Product Innovation – Competitive Advantage	0.653	0.808	0.000

Interpretation

The regression results indicate that product innovation has a strong and significant impact on the competitive advantage of Himalaya Wellness. The R² value of 0.653 shows that 65.3% of the variation in competitive advantage is explained by product innovation. The beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.808$) reflects a strong positive influence of product innovation on competitive advantage. Additionally, the significance value ($p = 0.000$) is less than 0.05, confirming that the model is statistically significant.

CHI-SQUARE TEST:

Null Hypothesis (H₀):

There is no significant association between gender and the primary reason for choosing Himalaya Wellness products.

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁):

There is a significant association between gender and the primary reason for choosing Himalaya Wellness products.

TABLE XIII: GENDER VS PRIMARY REASON FOR CHOOSING HIMALAYA WELLNESS

Gender	Availability	Brand Reputation	Effectiveness	Herbal/Natural Ingredients	Price	Total
Male	0	8	5	21	3	37
Female	13	7	6	43	6	75
Prefer Not to say	1	0	0	1	1	3
Total	14	15	11	65	10	115

Chi-Squared Tests			
	Value	df	p
X ²	96.609	4	0.000
N	115		

Interpretation:

The Chi-square test results show a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), indicating a statistically significant association between gender and the primary reason for choosing Himalaya Wellness products. This suggests that consumer preferences vary across different gender groups.

Therefore, gender influences the reasons behind selecting the brand. Hence, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H₁) is accepted.

VIII. FINDINGS

- The research, conducted with 115 respondents in Chennai, highlights a significantly young consumer base, with 50.4% of participants aged 25 or younger, indicating the brand's strong resonance with Gen Z.
- Findings are heavily influenced by female perspectives, as women comprised 65.2% of the survey sample, reflecting their high level of engagement with personal care and wellness products.
- Authentic herbal and natural ingredients serve as the most critical factor for consumers, with 56.5% of respondents identifying this as their primary reason for choosing the brand.
- Consumers strongly perceive the brand as a leader in merging traditional Ayurvedic principles with modern technology, a strategy that 64.4% of respondents explicitly acknowledged.
- A significant majority of participants (64.4%) agree that the company consistently and frequently invests in product innovation, maintaining a fresh and relevant product line.
- Himalaya Wellness is viewed as being better positioned than organic startups in the herbal segment by 65.2% of respondents, showcasing its resilience against newer market entrants.
- One of the brand's most recognised competitive assets is its strong distribution network, which was cited as a key strength by 68% of the participants.
- When compared to emerging organic brands, Himalaya's long-standing brand credibility is recognised as a superior advantage by 62.6% of the surveyed consumers.
- Approximately 60% of respondents believe the brand offers a more comprehensive product portfolio than its competitors, contributing to its ability to meet diverse consumer needs.
- The study found that 59.2% of consumers perceive the brand's pricing as competitive and value-oriented, making it an attractive option for price-conscious wellness seekers.
- Consumer preference is anchored in the brand's Ayurvedic foundation and safety profile, which drives the choices of 60.9% of the respondents.
- Correlation analysis yielded a strong positive relationship ($r = 0.791$) between perceived product innovation and customer preference, proving that

innovation directly influences brand selection.

- Statistical testing confirmed that higher levels of product innovation are strongly associated with greater competitive advantage ($r = 0.808$).
- Regression analysis indicates that product innovation explains 65.3% of the variation in the brand's competitive advantage, highlighting it as the primary driver of market success.
- A Chi-square test revealed a statistically significant association ($p = 0.000$) between gender and the primary reasons for brand selection, suggesting that marketing strategies should be tailored to different gender-based motivations.
- Ultimately, the findings establish that continuous product innovation is the vital catalyst for maintaining a dominant competitive position and fostering high levels of consumer trust.

IX. SUGGESTIONS

- Implement AI-driven hyper-personalisation to analyse the behaviour of the 50.4% of consumers under age 25 and deliver niche product formulations that meet Gen Z consumers specific wellness needs.
- Launch a premium organic sub-brand to directly counter niche startups and secure the market share of high-end consumers who seek more specialised herbal alternatives than the standard portfolio.
- Execute "Science of Ayurveda" transparency campaigns to close the gap between R&D investment and customer perception, ensuring consumers explicitly value the modern technology used in formulations.
- Develop gender-specific marketing mixes because statistical testing confirms that men and women have significantly different motivations for choosing Himalaya products.
- Prioritise a robust Direct-to-Consumer (D2C) digital strategy to complement the brand's 68% strong physical distribution and increase accessibility for the tech-savvy student demographic that dominates the user base.
- Leverage high brand credibility to diversify into adjacent high-growth sectors like nutraceuticals or preventive health foods, utilising existing trust to lower the cost of customer acquisition.
- Institutionalise a "Rapid Innovation Lab" to ensure a constant pipeline of new products, as regression analysis proves that innovation is the primary driver for 65.3% of the brand's competitive advantage.

- Strengthen value-based loyalty programs to convert the high number of "neutral" respondents into brand advocates by clearly communicating the long-term cost-effectiveness and safety of herbal ingredients.

X. CONCLUSION

The study underscores that Himalaya Wellness has successfully carved a dominant niche in the herbal market by strategically blending traditional Ayurvedic principles with modern scientific research. This integration has fostered a high degree of brand trust, particularly among a younger, female-dominated demographic in Chennai, where natural and safe ingredients are the primary drivers of purchase. The findings reveal that consumers largely perceive the brand as an innovative leader, a reputation supported by its frequent product launches and a comprehensive portfolio that effectively competes with emerging organic startups.

Statistical analysis provides robust evidence that product innovation is the cornerstone of the company's market success, explaining approximately 65.3% of its competitive advantage. The strong positive correlation ($r = 0.808$) between innovation and competitive standing suggests that as Himalaya continues to upgrade its offerings, its ability to outperform rivals strengthens significantly. This data-driven insight confirms that innovation is not merely a marketing tool but a vital functional strategy that directly dictates the brand's long-term sustainability in a crowded marketplace.

Furthermore, the research highlights the critical role of brand credibility and an expansive distribution network in maintaining customer preference. While price is a factor, the majority of consumers (60.9%) are anchored to the brand because of its perceived safety profile and established performance history. The significant association found between gender and brand selection reasons suggests that while the brand has broad appeal, its future growth lies in nuanced, segment-specific engagement strategies that cater to the diverse motivations of its user base.

In conclusion, while Himalaya Wellness maintains a superior competitive position, the rising influence of organic startups and evolving consumer expectations necessitate continuous adaptation. To sustain its "Happiness through Wellness" philosophy, the company must bridge the gap between R&D advancements and consumer perception through targeted communication. By leveraging its massive brand equity and reinforcing its innovative edge, Himalaya is well-positioned to lead the Indian wellness industry's projected growth and remain a preferred choice for health-conscious consumers.



International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology
Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435 (Online) Volume 15, Issue 05, May 2026)

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Acknowledgement

The authors sincerely thank the Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology and the School of Management Studies for the guidance and support provided to complete this research work successfully. This research paper was carried out as a part of the Project and Problem Based Learning (PBL) initiative of the institution. The authors also express gratitude to all respondents and contributors who supported the successful completion of the study titled "A Study on Product Innovation & Competitive Advantage of Himalaya Wellness in Chennai."