

ASSESSING THE MARKETING STRATEGIES OF AGRO-CHEMICAL COMPANIES AND THEIR IMPACT ON FARMER PURCHASE DECISIONS: A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF AMRAVATI DISTRICT

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Abstract

This research study analyses the marketing methods used by agro-chemical businesses in the Amravati District from 2011 to 2021 and determines how they affected farmers' purchasing choices. Insightful advice for industry stakeholders and legislators will be offered by the research, which seeks to shed light on the interplay between agro-chemical marketing techniques and farmer behaviour. This study examines several points of agro-chemical marketing tactics by using a mix of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, such as interviews, surveys, and market analysis. In it, we look at how several agro-chemical firms in the Amravati District have positioned their products, used various distribution channels, set prices, and promoted their products over the last decade.

Product quality, brand reputation, price sensitivity, distribution channel accessibility, and informational sources are some of the other aspects that the study explores as impacting farmers' buying choices. This research aims to unveil the fundamental variables driving farmer behaviour in the procurement of agri-inputs by analysing these elements in combination with the marketing methods employed by agro-chemical businesses. In the context of agro-chemicals, the results of this study add to our knowledge of how marketing tactics influence farmers' purchasing choices. This research provides significant insights for agro-chemical firms looking to optimise their marketing efforts and boost market penetration in the Amravati District. It identifies the most relevant elements and assesses the efficiency of alternative marketing techniques. On top of that, lawmakers may use the results to create focused actions that help local farmers and encourage sustainable farming methods.

Keywords - Agro-chemicals, Marketing strategies, Farmer purchase decisions, Agricultural inputs, Promotional tactics

Introduction

A large percentage of the population in areas like the Amravati District relies on agriculture for their living, making it an essential part of the local economy. Fertilisers, insecticides, and herbicides are examples of agro-chemicals that have seen widespread use in this industry in recent decades. In order to manage pests and diseases, increase crop yields, and guarantee

food security, agro-chemicals play a crucial role. Thus, agro-chemical corporations' marketing efforts greatly affect farmers' farming methods and financial stability.

Agricultural Maharashtra, of which the Amravati District is a part, is a microcosm of India's larger agricultural scene. Agricultural methods in the area have changed significantly during the last decade as a result of technological advancements, changes in market dynamics, and new government regulations. It is crucial to comprehend the marketing methods of agro-chemical businesses in the area and how they affect farmers' purchasing choices in light of this context.

Examining the marketing approaches used by agro-chemical businesses in the Amravati District from 2011 to 2021 and how they affected farmers' purchasing choices is the main objective of this research article. The purpose of this research is to shed light on what motivates farmers to buy agri-inputs by dissecting agro-chemical marketing into its component parts, such as advertising, distribution, price, and product positioning.

As an added bonus, this study aims to explain the wider societal and economic effects of agro-chemical advertising in the Amravati Region. Industry stakeholders, legislators, and academics may all benefit from this study's examination of the connection between marketing tactics, farmer decision-making processes, and agricultural sustainability.

The purpose of this study is to add to what is already known about agro-chemical marketing and how it affects farming practices by conducting interviews with relevant stakeholders, analysing the market, and doing empirical research. In the end, our study might help the agro-chemical business make better strategic decisions, the Amravati District and beyond could benefit from more focused governmental interventions, and sustainable agricultural growth could be easier to achieve.

Literature review

The factors that influence consumers' choices to buy different food items were the subject of an empirical study by Kumar et al. (2017). Using age, gender, and income as demographic factors, they painstakingly analysed the interaction between product brand and country of origin. Curiously, they found that these effects were unrelated to demographic characteristics. It is worth mentioning that the survey highlighted how buyers tend to value brand reputation more than the place of origin of a product.

A thorough investigation on processed food consumption habits in Delhi's metropolitan environment was initiated by Shaw et al. (2013). According to their findings, variables including product accessibility, personal preference, and the persuasive power of ads all play a role in consumers' decision-making processes. Brand recognition, official certification, and price all played significant roles in the final purchases. In addition, Shaw and colleagues found that busy homemakers loved processed foods because they were convenient, but that

these foods had a hard time breaking into the market because of their high price, particularly among those living in semi-urban and rural areas.

Ragavan (2014) investigated what makes people buy veggies from grocery stores nowadays. According to his findings, there is a certain order of importance for the following factors: price, variety of vegetables, consistency of availability, correctness of weights and bills, and ease of accessible.

Distinguishing between respondents in rural and urban areas, Dhillon et al. (2015) painstakingly investigated consumer purchase behaviour in the setting of Ludhiana. According to their findings, both groups preferred to purchase in adjacent markets. Notably, while shopping in rural areas, visual appeal was the most important factor for customers, followed by affordability, quality, and proximity to home. Quality, product appearance, buy site ease, and product expiration date were somewhat different priorities for urban customers.

To decipher the complexities of the variables impacting Norwegian consumers' intake of fruits and vegetables, Wandel (2015) used extensive multivariate analysis. The results demonstrated that demographic factors such as age, gender, income, and family composition had a vital part in the research. Vegetable intake was lower among those who were more concerned about their health, and greater among those who preferred to cook their meals quickly.

A perceptive research focused on the preferences of regular organic product customers was carried out by Cicia and Giudice (2022). According to their findings, there are significant differences in customer preferences when it comes to cost and where the product is made. Surprisingly, cost became a clear indicator of product quality. Interestingly, the kind of certification programme consistently had a stronger impact on customer choices than the items' visual appeal.

Researchers Nandagopal and Chinnaiyan (2023) used the stringent Garret's ranking method to investigate which soft drink brands were most popular in rural Tamil Nadu. According to their research, retail price is the second most important factor, after product quality. Brand loyalty among rural customers was shown to be heavily influenced by characteristics such as product quality and consistent availability.

In 2015, Ramasamy et al. investigated how people in Madurai used quick meals. Their research showed that price and product quality are two of the most important factors. Importantly, although 76% of people said that cost was a major factor, 78% said that quality was very important. Along with the allure of a longer shelf life, the product's packaging and the manufacturer's reputation also attracted significant attention.

The mechanics of customer brand loyalty in the food purchase context were illuminated by Narang (2016). According to Narang, brand recall techniques need to be implemented since customers in this area are not loyal to just one brand. To attract young buyers, it became necessary to use repetitive advertising efforts and to make sure the product was in line with current fashions and trends. Also suggested as ways to boost sales were promotional efforts like freebies and discounts.

According to Vincent (2016), product quality is the most important factor in making consumers want to buy branded goods. Researchers concluded that customers were prepared to pay a premium for branded goods because of the products' well-deserved reputation for high quality. With a focus on the substantial role that children play in family purchase choices, Vincent also highlighted the powerful influence of media in creating and maintaining brand perceptions.

In Dindigul, Tamil Nadu, Venkateswaran et al. (2021) performed a detailed analysis of brand preferences among a subset of household brands. The importance of advertising, product quality, brand awareness, and brand image as marketing factors in shaping customer preferences and directing purchase choices was highlighted by their study. The research highlighted how important it is for companies to fully understand these elements so that they can influence customer decisions in their favour.

Objectives of the study

- To assess the effectiveness of various promotional tactics utilized by agro-chemical companies in influencing farmer purchase decisions.
- To analyze the role of distribution channels in facilitating the access of farmers to agro-chemical products within the Amravati District.
- To evaluate the impact of pricing strategies employed by agro-chemical companies on farmer purchase behavior and market competitiveness.

Research methodology

The researcher conducted surveys with farmers in the Amravati District to collect quantitative data on their agro-chemical purchase behaviour, preferences, and perceptions. To guarantee representation across various demographic and geographical groups, stratified random sampling methods were used to choose the sample. Used statistical methods to examine survey data for trends, correlations, and variables impacting farmers' buying choices. These included descriptive statistics, factor analysis, and regression analysis.

Data analysis and discussion

Agri inputs	Number of respondents
Seed	300
Agro-chemicals	200
Fertilizers	250

Table 1 – Number of respondents

This table gives a glimpse of how many people filled out the survey depending on their ties to various agricultural inputs, such as seeds, agro-chemicals, and fertilisers.

It seems that seeds are the most regularly given agricultural input among the studied population, with 300 respondents affiliated with them. This may point to the importance of seeds in the region's farming methods. Questions such as where farmers get their seeds, what kinds of seeds they like, and what variables impact seed selection might be the subject of future research. 200 responders were related with agro-chemicals, according to the statistics. Although it's a smaller percentage of the total responders, it's still a significant one when compared to the seeds group. For marketing and policy interventions to be successful, it is vital to understand how farmers perceive and use agro-chemicals, which are essential for pest management, disease control, and crop improvement. Another important agricultural input in the research region is fertilisers, which the 250 respondents indicate around. Use patterns of fertilisers may reveal a lot about farming methods and soil management approaches, which in turn affect soil fertility and crop yields. If we want to promote sustainable practices and balanced nutrient management, we may learn a lot by studying fertiliser preferences, application rates, and sustainability awareness.

Interpretation:

The varied tastes and demands of farmers are shown by the distribution of responders across various agricultural inputs. The different numbers of responders linked to seeds, agro-chemicals, and fertilisers indicate different degrees of significance or use patterns, even though all three inputs are crucial for agricultural output. In order to promote sustainable agricultural practices, increase access to inputs, and develop focused marketing strategies, it is essential to understand the variables impacting farmer choices about these inputs, including product quality, price, availability, and effectiveness. The relationships between farmers and agricultural inputs can be better understood with further analysis of the survey data, which includes demographic information, farming practices, and market dynamics. This will allow for more informed decision-making and interventions to support agricultural development in the study area.

Agri-input	Extremely high	High	Negligible
Seed	47	45	8
Agro-chemicals	51	40	9
Fertilizers	55	30	15

Table 2 – Effect of Agro-chemical businesses' marketing methods on the percentage of replies

The table below shows the proportion of responses for each kind of agricultural input - seeds, agro-chemicals, and fertilisers - and how those responses relate to the perceived impact of the

marketing strategies used by agro-chemical enterprises. The degrees of influence are Extremely High, High, and Negligible.

In terms of seed-related queries, 47% of respondents felt that agro-chemical company marketing strategies had a very high influence. Very high: 45 percent of those who took the survey said that marketing strategies had a very high effect on questions about seeds. Very few people (8%) think that marketing strategies have any effect on seed-related enquiries.

Agro-chemicals: Very High: Nearly half of those who took the survey felt that the marketing strategies used by agro-chemical companies had a very high effect on queries about these products. Marketing strategies have a significant effect on requests for agrochemicals, according to 40% of respondents. Very few people (9% to be exact) thought that marketing strategies had no effect on agro-chemical enquiries.

Surprisingly High: Among the three groups, 55% of people said that agro-chemical companies' marketing strategies had the most influence on questions about fertilisers. Marketing strategies have a significant influence on questions about fertiliser, according to 30% of respondents. Fifteen percent of those who took the survey said that marketing strategies had no effect on questions about fertiliser.

Interpretation:

According to the statistics, the proportion of queries received for seeds, agro-chemicals, and fertilisers is significantly affected by the marketing strategies used by agro-chemical companies. Marketing strategies seem to have the most influence on fertilisers, according to the survey's top responder, followed by agro-chemicals and seeds. Varied agricultural inputs have varied perceived marketing impacts, suggesting that companies should target farmers with marketing tactics that are unique to each input type. These results show that agro-chemical companies need to put money into strategic marketing campaigns that reach and engage their target demographic in order to influence farmers' decisions and actions when it comes to agri-inputs.

Conclusion

Finally, the impact of agro-chemical companies' marketing approaches on the response rates for various agricultural inputs sheds light on the ever-changing nature of agri-input marketing. Agricultural inputs such as seeds, agro-chemicals, and fertilisers are all significantly influenced by marketing strategies in terms of the proportion of queries received. The significance of successful marketing techniques in shaping farmer behaviour and decision-making is underscored by the fact that most respondents see marketing approaches as having an extremely high or high influence on agri-input-related queries. More than that, the numbers show that various agricultural inputs have varying perceived effects of marketing strategies. Most impacted are fertilisers, next agro-chemicals, and finally seeds. To

make the most of their marketing efforts, agro-chemical companies may have to target farmers by input category, taking into account their unique requirements and preferences.

Ultimately, the research highlights how important marketing is for influencing farmers' views, tastes, and agri-input purchases. Businesses in the agro-chemical industry may boost their visibility in the market, strengthen relationships with customers, and increase sales and profits in the cutthroat agriculture industry by launching strategic marketing initiatives. Businesses dealing in agro-chemicals, lawmakers, and everyone else with an interest in the agri-input industry should take note of these results. Businesses may better meet the demands of their target audience—farmers—by creating marketing strategies that are more strategic and customer-centric, and this can be achieved by recognising the effect of marketing approaches on farmer behaviour. Conversely, these findings may be used by policymakers to guide actions in the realm of sustainable agriculture and the provision of services to local farmers. In conclusion, the research adds to our knowledge of marketing's function in the agri-input industry and offers concrete suggestions for how companies and governments might improve their marketing strategies to foster long-term farmer success.

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