

## A STUDY OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION REGARDING MARKETING STRATEGIES OF AGROCHEMICAL COMPANIES IN PUNE REGION

**Shrikant B. Jagtap\***, **Rajesh N. Pahurkar+**

\* Annasaheb Magar College, Hadapsar, Pune

+ Department of Management Sciences, Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune

Customer happiness is a critical component of success, and it is heavily reliant on the actions of frontline service workers. Customers should be treated as assets, and their requirements, preferences, and purchasing habits should all be considered. The purpose of this study was to look into the role of the 4Ps in the Pune agrochemical sector. It is critical to note that the current study also questioned about the level of satisfaction of agrochemical company clients with relation to the marketing methods used by these organisations. Apart from satisfaction levels, this study looked into people's perspectives in order to gain a better understanding of the industry and develop appropriate marketing tactics. As previously stated, client knowledge of agrochemical products is also an important aspect of the current study. And this was explored using research questions like, "What is the level of client knowledge regarding agrochemical firms in India?" Aside from that, the study aims to conduct a thorough examination of agrochemical firms' availability, product price ranges, and client media preferences. It includes an introduction to the study, a summary of the problem, the study's aims, limitations, tools, a review of the literature, the study's benefits, and the study's conclusion.

**Keywords:** consumer satisfaction, agrochemical products, marketing strategies,

### **Introduction**

The Indian agrochemical sector is rapidly expanding. Due to the large population rate and the country's reliance on agriculture, there are several opportunities to enter this field. In this setting, the Indian agrochemical business has enormous potential to grow both domestically and internationally. Through the 'Make in India' campaign, the Indian government is strongly encouraging agricultural and related commercial sectors. As a result, agrochemical manufacturers in India have exciting growth prospects. Due to factors such as comparatively low cost of production, availability of qualified and trained workforce, availability of modern technology, machinery and equipment for quality products, collaboration with MNCs, export opportunities, and many others, industry is experiencing a favourable business environment. According to the report, the market offers several potential for businesses to expand and profit significantly. To ensure the industry's long-term viability, it is necessary to focus on R&D, develop an efficient distribution system, raise awareness of the potential health risks associated with the use of pesticides, redesign the registration process, and maintain control over current under-utilized production capacities. It will result in a rise in agro-production volume, increased employment possibilities, increased exports and decreased imports, new product development, and ultimately an increase in market share.

The first manufacturing unit for the Indian agrochemical sector was established in Ranipet in 1906, with a production capacity of 6000 metric tonnes. Following that, large-scale fertiliser and chemical factories were built in Cochin and Sindri in the 1940s and 1950s with the goal of developing a platform for mass production, manufacturing, and industrialization. The success of the green revolution in the late 1960s provided a substantial boost to the agrochemical business. Since the 1980s, India has seen a significant increase in fertiliser production capacity; it is now the world's third largest producer and consumer of fertilisers.

The India agrochemicals market is driven by the country's growing population, which has resulted in the country's agricultural practises being adequate, boosting the use of Indian agrochemical goods for farming activities. The industry has benefited from the Indianization of the agrochemical business, which has boosted agrochemical product sales. Other factors influencing India's agrochemical industry's growth include population expansion, increased food production needs, and economic growth.

Due to the increased effect of urbanisation, the landmass available for agriculture is gradually shrinking, giving an urge for farmers to utilise various agrochemicals to boost land productivity and maintain soil health as demand for food items rises. The country's good trend and integrating farming techniques are predicted to drive the agrochemicals industry's growth rate in India throughout the forecast period. However, insufficient understanding of the benefits of agrochemicals among farmers, as well as their low adoption of modern-day farming practises, may stymie the market.

The research examines the top companies in India's agrochemicals business, including their competitive landscape, capacity, and recent changes such as mergers, acquisitions, and investments, capacity expansions, and plant turnarounds. The comprehensive EMR report includes a SWOT analysis as well as an in-depth study of the industry based on Porter's five forces model. The agrochemicals industry in India is expected to reach USD 4.5 billion by 2020, thanks to technological developments and increased awareness of current farm methods. The market is predicted to increase at a CAGR of 8.6% over the forecast period of 2022-2027, aided by the use of integrated farming practises. By 2026, the global agrochemicals market is expected to reach USD 7.4 billion.

The rigorous research process used by EMR goes deep into the market, encompassing both macro and micro factors. EMR's research process combines cutting-edge analytical technologies with the knowledge of their highly accomplished team, resulting in accurate, actionable industry insights that help their customers stay ahead of the competition.

### **Problem description**

The title of this study represents a research problem that is being considered. Further justification in relation to the research problem, on the other hand, may justify the research problem. India's population growth is a serious worry. It leads to increased agro-based product production. To meet

the expanding demand and supply of agro products, greater agricultural productivity is required. Agrochemical businesses must work hard to seize these enormous market potential. It has become imperative for agrochemical businesses to reassess their marketing tactics in order to increase sales. As a result, it contributes to the agrochemical goods' brand value. This assessment was based on customer feedback (represented by farmers) that were taken into account for the purposes of analysis.

The study's goals were to look at agrochemical businesses' product awareness.

- Investigate the market for agrochemical products.
- Assessing client satisfaction

#### **Study Limitations:**

- The study is only conducted for a limited amount of time.
- There were just 100 people that took part in the survey.
- The conclusions and recommendations given are not relevant to the entire universe.

#### **Literature review**

Studies on organic farming through sustainable agriculture, according to Machala Santhosh Kumar (2017), address not only the food needs of the current generation in an environmentally friendly manner, but also the needs of future generations while also preserving our environment. Pesticides and fertilisers used in modern agriculture have had a severe impact on the environment, influencing soil fertilisers, water hardness, genetic variety in plants, and animal feed, leading to an increase in health problems and other serious health concerns.

Organic agriculture products, according to Sujaya. H (2018), have a unique way of production that preserves the environment, eliminates soil erosion, and thus reduces pollution by encouraging a balanced system of use of organic standards for agriculture products. The major goal of this case study is to determine the factors that influence the utilisation of geography and organic product export activities in Asia, particularly India.

According to studies by Nayana Sharam (2018), food consumption patterns are changing globally among consumers, and they now want food that is free of synthetic chemicals, fertilisers, and pesticides, i.e., they want to consume organic food, which is not only healthy but also environmentally friendly. Organic products are less popular among customers due to decreased farmer productivity of organic produce, resulting in a high market price for organic food.

Customer happiness has long been a central idea in modern marketing theory and buyer behaviour research. Customers who are satisfied with a product or service offering after using it are more inclined to purchase it again and attempt line extensions, according to conventional wisdom (East, 1997). Customers who are satisfied are more likely to tell others about their great experiences, resulting in positive word of mouth advertising (Richens, 1983; File and Prince, 1992). Customers that are dissatisfied are more inclined to switch brands and spread poor word of mouth advertising. The importance of customer satisfaction and retention in developing a strategy for a "market-oriented" and "customer-focused" company cannot be overstated (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990).

In today's highly competitive business world, customer happiness is frequently defined as the cornerstone of success.

The confirmation paradigm, which concerns the comparison of product or service performance expectations and assessments, has received a lot of attention in the literature connected to consumer satisfaction (Goode and Moutinho, 1995). The confirmation model considers satisfaction to be the fulfilment of a customer's expectations (East, 1997; Oliver, 1989) and is generally linked to product usage patterns (East, 1997). However, customer happiness research has shifted to the disconfirmation paradigm, which considers product and brand satisfaction as the outcome of two cognitive variables: prepurchase expectations and disconfirmation (Peter and Olson, 1996, p. 509). "Prepurchase expectations are views about the product's expected performance; disconfirmation refers to the disparities between pre-purchase expectations and post-purchase perceptions," according to Peter and Olson (1996).

Services have various distinguishing traits that set them apart from tangible goods (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996). Intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity, and perishability are all characteristics of services (Lovelock, 1996; Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996).

These traits have the effect of making it difficult for customers to evaluate services during the pre-consumption, consumption, and post-consumption stages of the decision-making process (Legg and Baker, 1996). Because services are intangible, it is difficult for businesses to comprehend how their customers perceive and evaluate the quality of their offerings (Zeithaml, 1981). Furthermore, services are used in real time: they are utilised as soon as they are made available to clients. They can't be stored or examined for quality like a tangible object. As a result, a client is likely to be affected by any service production failure. As a result, "dissatisfaction with a service could absorb the majority of the period during which the service is consumed" (East, 1997), but this may not be the case with a physical product.

Services have a high level of credibility and experience but a low level of searchability (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996; Alford and Sherrell, 1996). Search qualities, according to Zeithaml and Bitner (1996), are those characteristics that purchasers can determine prior to making a purchase. Color, style, pricing, fit, feel, and fragrance are all examples of search traits. Customers can only determine experience quality after they have made a purchase or have consumed something. Taste, wearability, and contentment are just a few examples. Credibility attributes are those that a customer may find difficult to assess, even after purchase and use. This is due to the fact that the client may lack the necessary skills, expertise, and information to execute the evaluation.

According to Zeithaml and Bitner (1996), services frequently have few search criteria but numerous experience and credibility qualities due to their distinctive traits. Alford and Sherrell (1996) propose that, in the case of services with strong experience or credibility qualities, customers' satisfaction judgments may be based on their emotive responses to the service provider and their script-based expectations about the method utilised in the service. It's worth noting that effect refers to the internal, psychological reactions that customers may have in response to environmental stimuli and occurrences (Peter and Olson, 1996). Scripts, on the other hand, are ordered networks of procedural knowledge stored in the minds of customers. Scripts, in simple terms, are knowledge about a series of events, or how to do things (Peter and Olson, 1996). The customer, according to Alford and Sherrell (1996), is the person or unit who receives the output

of a system process. It's worth pointing out that a customer can be the immediate, intermediate, or ultimate customer. A client can also be a person or a group of people, as well as a process or group of processes. Consumer satisfaction, on the other hand, occurs when a product or service meets the needs, wants, and expectations of the customer. We need to look at the levels of specific satisfaction in order to better comprehend consumer satisfaction. We must also acknowledge that there are levels of consumer satisfaction that define the basic ingredients of quality in some ways.

### Methodology of investigation

Data from the field In the Coimbatore district, a well-structured questionnaire was produced and given to organic farm product consumers.

Secondary information Journals and periodicals, as well as websites of organic farm products, were chosen as secondary information sources for the current study.

Statistical tools that were employed

The acquired data was examined using percentages, frequencies, and the chi-square test for data analysis. In addition, graphs are created.

### Timeframe of the Research

The research was carried out from June to September 2021.

Design of Sampling The study only looks at a chosen group of people (the user of organic farm product).

A stratified random selection technique was used in this investigation, and 100 clients were chosen.

### Analyze the data

Table No.1

Distribution of respondents according to types of farming practices

Sr.No.	Row Labels	Kharip	Rubbi	Rubbi, Kharip	Grand Total
1	Ambegaon	3	15	4	22
2	Junnar	13	17	5	35
3	Khed		22	7	29
4	Mulashi	2	8	4	14
	Grand Total	18	62	20	100
	%age	18%	62%	20%	100%

Source: Field investigation

Though, apart from this, 30 per cent of the respondents are having both Kharip and Rubbi cultivating practice. This has reflected that majority of the respondents efficiently utilizes the land by having at least two crops in a year. This practice contributes to the enhanced and potential demand for the agrochemical products. Though no direct influence can be made by agrochemical companies in this regards as water availability is major concern while adopting the farming practice and water is the resource on which government is having direct control.

The availability of water and cultivation style jointly defines the type of land such Bagayati and Jirayati.

### Level of satisfaction

Row Labels	Strongly dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Strongly Satisfied	Grand Total
Ambegaon	0	1	3	16	2	22
Junnar	0	2	2	21	10	35
Khed	0	2	2	21	4	29
Mulashi	0	1	3	10	0	14
Grand Total	0	6	10	68	16	100

### Finding and discussion

Almost half of the clients who responded were satisfied with the agrochemical businesses' marketing and promotional strategies. The explanation for this could be that most customers (farmers) are unaware of the company that manufactures the products they use.

- Although there is widespread awareness of the benefits of utilising fertilisers and pesticides, less is known about herbicides. Though half of the responders are aware of the agrochemical products' adverse effects. Customers (farmers) are only aware of the applications of these products in relation to the specific crop, with the exception of herbicides.

- The majority of respondents are likewise unaware of the promotional details provided by agrochemical businesses for their products.

- In terms of product availability, it should be mentioned that fertilisers and pesticides are always available. However, availability in remote places may be limited.

- It's worth noting that pesticides and insecticides are more expensive than fertilisers and herbicides when it comes to agrochemical prices. It should also be emphasised that fertilisers are less expensive than other items; nevertheless, before concluding, it should be remembered that total acreage under cultivation, crop economy, and farmer financial situation are all important factors to consider.

### Conclusion

Agrochemical goods were familiar to the majority of consumers. For a long time, the relevance of agrochemical agriculture products was overlooked. As a result, the consumer's preference has changed to agrochemical products. The survey revealed that while consumers were aware of image and availability, they were not completely loyal to agrochemical products. The people who did not have the double were drawn to agrochemical products. To be effective in selling agrochemical products, marketers must devise promotions that are both realistic and morally acceptable in terms of volume and variety.

Consumers are prepared to pay higher prices for agrochemicals, which could be considered an investment expense. Consumers' views and preferences toward organic products, as well as their purchasing decisions, may be influenced by their knowledge and awareness of the products.

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