

A STUDY ON FACTORS INFLUENCING FARMERS AND DEALERS WHILE SELECTING VARIOUS BRANDS OF PESTICIDES

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Agrochemicals occupy major share in the agribusiness wing of the agriculture sector. India is the 4th largest producer of agrochemicals globally with 125 technical grade manufactures, 800 formulators, over 145000 distributors (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, 2013). Thus the Indian agrochemicals market is highly fragmented in nature and witnesses fierce competition with large number of organized sector players and significant share of spurious pesticides. In this scenario, every company wants to be dynamic in the race. This study will help the companies to understand the purchasing behaviour of the farmers and dealers in selecting pesticides amongst various brands.

The study was undertaken in the Kodad region of Nalgonda district of Telangana state where five mandals were selected. About 2 villages from each mandal and 10 farmers from each village were selected randomly. Thus a total of 100 farmers formed the basis of the study. Similarly 20 dealers were also selected for the study. The data was collected with the help of pretested questionnaire and it was tabulated and analyzed by using simple statistical tools.

To find out the most significant factor which influences the respondent, Garrett's Ranking Technique was used (Rethina pandy, A and Selvakumar, M. 2013). The respondents have been asked to assign the rank for all factors listed and the outcome of such ranking have been converted into score value with the help of the following formula:

$$\text{Percent position} = 100 (R_{ij} - 0.5) / N_j$$

Where R_{ij} = Rank given for the i th variable by j th respondents

N_j = Number of variable ranked by j th respondents

With the help of Garrett's Table, the percent position estimated was converted into scores. Then for each factor, the scores of each individual are added and then total value of scores and mean values of score was calculated. The factors having highest mean value is considered to be the most important factor.

The purchasing behaviour of the farmers towards various brands of pesticides are often influenced by several factors. Ten factors were identified and the sampled farmers ranked the same based on the priority. It is tabulated and presented in Table1.

Table 1. Purchasing behaviour of the farmers towards various brands of pesticides

S.No	Factors	Total score	Mean score	Rank
1	Effective control	7282	72.82	I
2	Credit terms	3724	37.24	VIII
3	Brand image	6240	62.40	III
4	Price	6315	63.15	II
5	Dealer's recommendation	4901	49.01	V
6	Ready availability	4723	47.23	VI
7	Promotional campaign	4682	46.82	VII
8	Progressive farmers advice	5558	55.58	IV
9	Safety	3689	36.89	IX
10	Packaging	2656	26.56	X

It is observed from Table 1 that the most important influencing factor while purchasing of any brand of pesticide by the farmer is effective control of pests and therefore the selected farmers gave their

preference as number one. The factors like price of the product and brand image were ranked as 2nd and 3rd most important factors respectively. Advice of the progressive farmers, dealer's recommendation, ready

availability, promotional campaign and credit facility scored 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th ranks respectively. However the factors like safety and packaging confined to 9th and 10th ranks while selecting the pesticides of various brands. The results are in line with (Dharmaraj and Pratik Desai, 2013).

Dealers are the most important functionary in the market channel of pesticide business. Like the farmers, dealers also consider various factors while stocking a particular brand of pesticides.

Table 2. Factors influencing dealers in stocking the pesticides brand

No	Factors	Total score	Mean score	Rank
1	Past record of the company	1371	68.55	I
2	Price	981	49.05	V
3	Performance of the product	993	49.65	IV
4	Sales team influence	714	35.7	VIII
5	Dealer's margin	1360	68.0	II
6	Trade credit	763	38.15	VII
7	Brand image	1256	62.8	III
8	Promotional support by the company	852	42.6	VI
9	Incentives and gift packages	684	34.2	IX

It is observed from Table 2 that the factor past record of the company which includes the long lasting business relationship with the dealers was considered as most important and therefore given the first rank by the selected dealers. Dealers margin and brand image of the product are ranked as 2nd and 3rd important factors. The factors like performance of the product, price, promotional support by the company, trade credit, sales, personnel influence and incentives and gift packages were given 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th ranks respectively. Though the factor incentives and gift packages looks lucrative but still the dealers preferred better margins and brand image

of the product and therefore it was given last priority compared to the other factors. Therefore, it can be inferred that past record of the company, dealers' margins and brand images played the key role in influencing the dealers in promoting various brands of pesticides.

It can be concluded from the study that effective control, price and brand image were the most important factors that influences farmers in selecting various brands of pesticides. Similarly, past record of the company, dealers margin and brand image were the key factors considered by dealers in selecting and stocking various pesticide brands.

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