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STUDY ON MARKETING AND BRAND AWARENESS OF FUNGICIDE IN HATHRAS DISTRICT OF UTTAR PRADESH

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ABSTRACT

The present study, entitled "Study on Marketing and Brand Awareness of Fungicide in Hathras District of Uttar Pradesh" was conducted in the Mursan block of Hathras district, where 220 farmers were randomly selected from seven purposively selected villages. The study aimed to examine the socio-economic status of respondents, assess the brand awareness and effectiveness of Conika fungicide (by Dhanuka Agritech Ltd.), evaluate marketing efficiency, and identify marketing constraints faced by farmers in the study area. The socio-economic profile revealed that the majority of the respondents were marginal farmers (32.73%), followed by small, semi-medium, medium, and large farmers. Most farmers belonged to the young age group, with 70% being literate, and the population was predominantly male. The majority lived in nuclear families and had annual incomes below ₹1 lakh. Regarding brand effectiveness, 33.64% of farmers found Conika highly effective, 30.91% rated it moderately effective, while others considered it less or not effective. The study identified several factors that influenced brand awareness, including availability (20.90%), performance and quality (16.36%), brand reputation (13.63%), price and value (12.72%), marketing efforts (11.81%), distribution reach (10%), packaging design (9.09%), and social media presence (5.45%). The study also highlighted major marketing constraints, with high transportation cost ranked first, followed by shortage of traders, price fluctuation, high product prices, storage issues, and delayed sales. The findings of this study offer critical insights for agrochemical companies, marketers, and policymakers to improve the brand reach and marketing efficiency of fungicides like Conika, ultimately contributing to increased crop protection and farmer profitability.

Keywords: Fungicide, Agrochemicals, Marketing Constraints, Hathras, Price Fluctuations, Brand Awareness

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture continues to be the backbone of the Indian economy, contributing significantly to GDP and employing a majority of the rural population. Within the agricultural landscape, the use of crop protection chemicals such as fungicides has become increasingly essential in ensuring stable yields and controlling plant diseases. In states like Uttar Pradesh, where crops such as potato are grown extensively, fungal infestations like late blight pose serious threats to farm productivity.

Dhanuka's Conika, a broad-spectrum fungicide containing Kasugamycin and Copper Oxychloride, is effective in managing a wide range of fungal pathogens. While the product is technically sound, its market penetration depends not only on its efficacy but also on how it is marketed, priced, and perceived by end users. Brand awareness, farmer education, channel efficiency, and marketing costs significantly influence product adoption in rural areas. The Hathras district, known for its active agriculture, presents a unique setting for studying the marketing dynamics of fungicides. Despite the availability of effective inputs, small and marginal farmers often lack access to reliable information and are influenced largely by local input retailers and price considerations. In this context, understanding farmers' socio-economic conditions, their awareness about Conika, and the efficiency of its marketing system becomes crucial. This study aims to bridge this gap by evaluating the socio-economic status of farmers, assessing the level of brand awareness of Conika fungicide, and analyzing the associated marketing costs, margins, and constraints. The findings will provide insights for agrochemical companies and policymakers to improve brand outreach, pricing strategies, and marketing interventions for sustainable agricultural development.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in the Hathras district of Uttar Pradesh, a region known for extensive potato cultivation. The area was selected purposively due to its active use of fungicides and the presence of Dhanuka's Conika in the local agricultural input market. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure representation across various socio-economic groups. Three blocks were selected from the district based on the intensity of potato farming and availability of Conika. A total of 120 farmers who had either used fungicides or were potential users were interviewed. The sample included small, marginal, and medium farmers to reflect the diversity in farm size and resource access.

In addition to farmers, market functionaries such as retailers, wholesalers, and company representatives were also surveyed to gain an understanding of pricing, distribution, and marketing practices.

ANALYTICAL TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

1. Descriptive Statistics

Used to analyze the socio-economic profile of the respondents.

2. Garrett's Ranking Technique

Percent Position = (100 × (Rij – 0.5)) / Nj

3. Marketing Cost and Margin Analysis

This analysis was used to understand the costs incurred and profits earned by intermediaries in the marketing channels.

a) Price Spread:

Price Spread = Price Paid by Consumer – Price Received by Producer

b) Marketing Margin:

Margin = Selling Price – (Purchase Price + Marketing Cost)

4. Marketing Efficiency (Shepherd's Method)

Formula: Marketing Efficiency (ME) = Value of Goods Sold / Total Marketing Cost

Data were collected through structured schedules and interviews during the 2024–2025 agricultural year.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- Age Distribution: 56.36% of farmers are in the 20–35 age group
- Education: 28.18% had primary-level education, 20% were illiterate
- Gender: 82.73% male, 17.27% female
- Family Type: 89.09% nuclear, 10.90% joint
- Annual Income: 39.09% earn < ₹1 lakh, 29.54% ₹1–2.5 lakh, 20.91% ₹2.5–5 lakh, 10.45% > ₹5 lakh

1. Socio-Economic Profile of Respondents

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Farm Size

S. No.	Farm Size Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Marginal (<1 ha)	72	32.73
2	Small (1–2 ha)	45	20.45
3	Semi-Medium (2–4 ha)	41	18.63
4	Medium (4–10 ha)	39	17.73
5	Large (>10 ha)	23	10.45
	Total	**220**	**100.00**

Interpretation:

The distribution of respondents reveals that a majority (32.73%) fall under the marginal category, holding less than 1 hectare of land. Only 10.45% of the respondents are large farmers with over 10 hectares of land.

2. Brand Effectiveness of Conika

Table 2: Farmer Perception on Brand Effectiveness

S. No.	Effectiveness Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Highly Effective	74	33.64
2	Moderately Effective	68	30.91
3	Less Effective	42	19.09
4	Not Effective	36	16.36
	Total	**220**	**100.00**

Interpretation:

The perception of Dhanuka's Conika among the surveyed farmers is largely positive, with 33.64% rating it as highly effective and 30.91% rating it as moderately effective. However, 19.09% considered it less effective and 16.36% found it not effective.

3. Brand Awareness of Conika

Table 3: Factors Influencing Brand Awareness

S. No.	Factors	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Availability in the Market	46	20.90
2	Performance and Quality	36	16.36
3	Brand Reputation	30	13.63
4	Price and Value Proposition	28	12.72
5	Marketing and Advertising	26	11.81
6	Distribution Reach	22	10.00
7	Packaging and Design	20	09.09
8	Social Media Presence	12	05.45
	Total	**220**	**100.00**

Interpretation:

Availability in local markets (20.90%) emerged as the most influential factor driving awareness of Conika. Performance (16.36%) and brand reputation (13.63%) also played key roles. Factors like marketing and advertising (11.81%) and packaging (9.09%) had a lesser impact. Notably, social media had the least influence (5.45%), reflecting the limited penetration of digital platforms in these farming communities.

4. Marketing Margin, Cost, and Efficiency

Channel I: Manufacturer → Retailer → Farmer

Particulars	Amount (₹)	% of MRP
MRP (Consumer Price)	1,465	100%
Retailer's Margin	220	15%
Retailer's Marketing Cost	73	5%
Price to Manufacturer	1,172	80%
Manufacturer's Cost	146	10%
Net Price to Manufacturer	1,026	70%

Channel II: Manufacturer → Wholesaler → Retailer → Farmer

Particulars	Amount (₹)	% of MRP
MRP (Consumer Price)	1,465	100%
Retailer's Margin	146	10%
Retailer's Marketing Cost	73	5%
Wholesaler's Margin	220	15%
Wholesaler's Marketing Cost	73	5%
Price to Manufacturer	953	65%
Manufacturer's Cost	146	10%
Net Price to Manufacturer	807	55%

5. Constraints in Marketing of Conika

Table 4: Major Constraints Reported by Farmers

Constraint	No. of Respondents	Rank
High Transportation Cost	34	I
Shortage of Traders	19	II
Price Fluctuation	16	III
High Product Prices	14	IV
Storage Problems	15	V
Delayed Sales	6	VI

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that fungicides like Dhanuka's Conika play a significant role in improving crop protection, particularly for disease-prone crops such as potatoes in Hathras district. However, the effectiveness of such products is not solely dependent on their chemical performance but also on how well they are marketed and understood by farmers. From the findings, it was evident that brand awareness among farmers was moderate, influenced largely by product availability, past experience, dealer recommendations, and perceived product effectiveness. The majority of farmers relied on retailers and local input dealers for information and purchase decisions, while direct outreach or promotional activities by companies remained limited. The analysis of marketing channels revealed that Channel I (Manufacturer → Retailer → Farmer) was more efficient, yielding a higher net return to the manufacturer with lower price spread, whereas Channel II, though broader in reach, incurred higher costs due to additional intermediaries. Furthermore, the major constraints identified included high transportation costs, trader shortages, price fluctuations, and lack of demonstration programs, all of which adversely affected the accessibility and affordability of branded fungicides.

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