



“Assessment of farmer’s preference and buying behaviour towards use of organic fertilizers in Muzaffarpur district of Bihar”

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ABSTRACT

This abstract explores the multifaceted factors influencing the buying behavior of customers when it comes to organic fertilizers. As environmental concerns intensify, consumers are increasingly drawn to products that align with sustainability values. The abstract delves into how consumers' environmental consciousness impacts their decisions, driving them to opt for organic fertilizers to promote healthier ecosystems and reduce their ecological footprint. The perceived effectiveness and scientific validation of organic fertilizers also play a pivotal role in shaping purchasing decisions, as consumers seek assurances that these products deliver on their promises.

The abstract highlights the role of education and awareness in shaping consumer choices, emphasizing that informed customers are more likely to comprehend the benefits of organic fertilizers. Economic considerations, such as pricing and affordability, remain central in the decision-making process, prompting consumers to evaluate whether the advantages of organic fertilizers outweigh their higher costs compared to conventional alternatives.

Social and cultural factors are examined as well, demonstrating how recommendations from peers, cultural norms, and societal influences impact consumer perceptions and decisions. Effective marketing and communication strategies are discussed as crucial tools for addressing consumer concerns, emphasizing product benefits, and ultimately influencing buying behavior.

By acknowledging the intricate interplay of these factors, this abstract underscore the necessity for businesses in the organic fertilizer industry to tailor their strategies, enhance consumer education, and provide products that resonate with both environmental priorities and individual needs.

Keywords: - Organic fertilizers, Buying Behaviour, Factors affecting buying behaviour

INTRODUCTION

Organic fertilizers are fertilizers, derived from animal matters, animal excreta (manure), human excreta, and vegetable matters (e.g. compost and crop residues). Naturally occurring organic fertilizers include animal wastes from processing, peat, manure, slurry, and guano. Organic fertilizer adds nutrients through the natural processes of Nitrogen fixation, solubilizing phosphorus, and stimulating plant growth through the synthesis of growth promoting substances. India is the second largest organic fertilizer consumer in the world. As per figures of 2013-14 of

Indian government, 11.8 million acres of land in India is under organic certification. As on 31st March 2018, total area under organic certification process (registered under National Programme for Organic Production) is 3.56 million ha (2017-18). This includes 1.78 Million ha (50%) cultivable area and another 1.78 Million ha (50%) for wild harvest collection.

In recent years, the global agricultural landscape has witnessed a significant shift towards more sustainable and environmentally friendly practices. This transition has led to an increased interest in organic farming, which emphasizes the use of organic fertilizers to enhance soil fertility and promote plant growth. Organic fertilizers, derived from natural sources such as compost, animal manure, and plant-based materials, are perceived as a safer and more sustainable alternative to conventional chemical fertilizers. However, despite the growing awareness of their benefits, the adoption of organic fertilizers in agricultural practices is not without its challenges.

The buying behavior of organic fertilizers is influenced by a multitude of factors, including economic, social, environmental, and personal considerations. These factors often manifest as constraints that can hinder the widespread adoption of organic fertilizers. Understanding these constraints is essential for policymakers, agricultural practitioners, and marketers to develop strategies that promote the sustainable use of organic fertilizers. This study aims to explore and analyze the various constraints that impact the buying behavior of organic fertilizers, shedding light on the barriers that need to be addressed to facilitate their broader adoption.

This research will delve into both the demand-side and supply-side constraints, examining the perspectives of farmers, consumers, and industry stakeholders. On the demand side, factors such as price sensitivity, perceived effectiveness compared to chemical fertilizers, and awareness of organic farming practices play crucial roles in shaping buying decisions. On the supply side, challenges related to availability, distribution networks, quality control, and market regulations can impact the accessibility and credibility of organic fertilizers.

By identifying and addressing these constraints, policymakers can design targeted interventions to encourage the use of organic fertilizers, ultimately contributing to more sustainable agricultural practices and the preservation of environmental resources. Furthermore, businesses operating in the organic fertilizer sector can adapt their marketing strategies and supply chain mechanisms to better align with the needs and concerns of their target customers. Overall, a comprehensive understanding of the constraints in buying behavior regarding organic fertilizers will pave the way for a more informed and sustainable agricultural sector.

OVERVIEW OF ORGANIC AND APPROACH IN FARMING

During 1950s and 1960s, the ever-increasing population of India and several natural calamities led to severe food scarcity in the country. As a result, the government was forced to import food grains from foreign countries. To increase food security, the government had to drastically increase food production in India. The Green Revolution became the government's most important program in the 1960s. Several hectares of land were brought under cultivation. Hybrid seeds were introduced. Natural and organic fertilizers were replaced by Chemical fertilizers and locally made pesticides were replaced by chemical pesticides. However, the Green Revolution within a few years showed its impact.

Factors influencing the buying behaviour of respondents towards use of organic fertilizers

The buying behavior of organic fertilizers in India is influenced by a range of factors that shape consumers' decisions and preferences. These factors can be categorized into several key dimensions, each playing a distinct role in influencing purchasing choices. Here are some of the significant factors affecting the buying behavior of organic fertilizers in India:

Awareness and Knowledge: Lack of awareness and understanding about organic farming practices and the benefits of organic fertilizers can hinder their adoption. Educated consumers are more likely to appreciate the positive impacts of organic fertilizers on soil health, crop quality, and environmental sustainability.

Perceived Benefits: Consumers' perception of the benefits of using organic fertilizers, such as improved soil fertility, reduced chemical residues in crops, and overall environmental sustainability, greatly influences their buying behavior. Clear communication of these benefits can sway purchasing decisions.

Health Concerns: Growing concerns about the negative health impacts of chemical residues in food have led many consumers to seek organic alternatives. Organic fertilizers are perceived to contribute to safer and healthier produce, which can motivate consumers to choose products grown with such fertilizers.

Environmental Consciousness: India's agricultural landscape faces challenges related to soil degradation, water pollution, and biodiversity loss. Consumers who are environmentally conscious may opt for organic fertilizers to support more sustainable farming practices.

Government Policies and Initiatives: Government support and policies promoting organic farming can significantly influence buying behavior. Subsidies, incentives, and certification programs provided by the government can encourage both farmers and consumers to adopt organic fertilizers.

Certification and Quality Assurance: Consumers often rely on organic certification labels to identify authentic organic products. Trust in the certification process and quality assurance mechanisms can impact consumers' willingness to buy organic fertilizers.

Price and Affordability: The cost of organic fertilizers compared to conventional chemical fertilizers can be a significant factor. Higher prices of organic fertilizers may discourage price-sensitive consumers, especially those with limited financial resources.

Availability and Accessibility: The availability of organic fertilizers in local markets and retail outlets can influence consumer choices. Limited availability may restrict the accessibility of organic options for some consumers.

Cultural and Traditional Beliefs: Cultural and traditional practices related to agriculture can influence consumer perceptions. Regions with strong agricultural traditions may have a more receptive attitude toward organic fertilizers.

Word of Mouth and Social Influence: Recommendations from peers, friends, and family members can play a role in shaping consumers' decisions. Positive experiences shared within social networks can encourage others to try organic fertilizers.

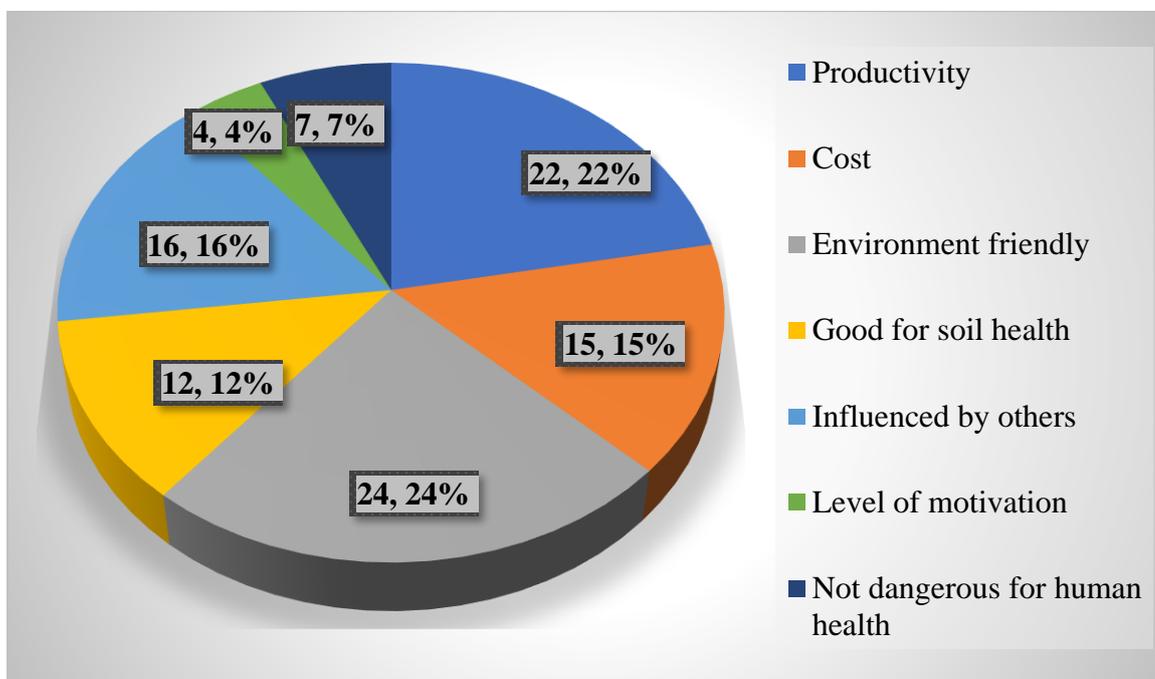
Educational and Extension Programs: Farmer training and extension programs that emphasize the benefits of organic fertilizers can influence both farmers' and consumers' perceptions and choices.

Media and Marketing: Effective marketing campaigns that highlight the benefits and positive impacts of organic fertilizers can raise awareness and influence consumers' buying behavior.

TABLE 1 - DIFFERENT FACTORS THAT AFFECT BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF THE RESPONDENTS

S. No.	Factors affecting buying behaviour	Farmers Response	%
1.	Productivity	22	22
2.	Cost	15	15
3.	Environment friendly	24	24
4.	Good for soil health	12	12
5.	Influenced by others	16	16
6.	Level of motivation	4	4
7.	Not dangerous for human health	7	7

Interpretation: - In the table we can see some factors that was affecting the buying behaviour of respondents towards the use of organic fertilizers. 22% of respondents were using it due to good productivity, 15% of respondents were using it due to the reasonable price of organic fertilizers, 24% of respondents were using it because of its environment friendly nature, 12% of respondents were using it because it's good for the health of soil, 16% of the respondents were influenced by others, 4% of respondents were motivated by someone for using organic fertilizers and 7% of respondents were using organic fertilizers because it doesn't harm human health.



CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the buying behavior for organic fertilizers is influenced by a multitude of factors that interact and shape consumer decisions. Environmental consciousness and sustainability play a pivotal role as consumers increasingly prioritize products that align with their values, seeking organic fertilizers to support healthier ecosystems and reduce their ecological footprint. The perception of product effectiveness and performance, backed by scientific evidence, also significantly impacts purchasing decisions, as consumers seek assurance that organic fertilizers deliver the desired results.

Furthermore, the influence of education and awareness cannot be underestimated, as informed consumers are more likely to understand the benefits of organic fertilizers and make informed choices. Economic factors, such as pricing and affordability, remain crucial determinants, with consumers assessing whether the perceived benefits of organic fertilizers justify their higher costs compared to conventional alternatives.

Cultural and social factors can also sway purchasing decisions, as peer recommendations, cultural norms, and social pressures influence consumers' perceptions and choices. Effective marketing and communication strategies that highlight the advantages of organic fertilizers, address consumer concerns, and emphasize their value proposition can significantly impact buying behavior.

It's important to note that individual preferences and needs vary, leading to a complex interplay of these factors in shaping the buying behavior for organic fertilizers. As sustainability awareness continues to grow, businesses in the organic fertilizer industry should consider these multifaceted influences to tailor their strategies, enhance consumer education, and offer products that meet both environmental and individual needs.

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