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Brand Promotional Strategy for Uttam Super in Rohtas, Kaimur and Aurangabad Districts of Bihar

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Abstract- Indian Fertilizer Industry being one of the allied sectors of agricultural spheres has immense scopes of growth in future. At present India is the world's third largest fertiliser producer with an installed capacity of 12.76 million tonnes of nitrogen, 6.2 million tonnes of phosphatic nutrients. Urea is the key fertilizer consumed within the nitrogenous fertilizers segment and accounts for almost 55-60% of all fertilizer consumed in India. Due to high prices of P &K fertilisers under the NBS regime, farmers are using less costly urea in place of P&K fertilisers which is one of the reasons for unbalanced use of fertilizers which in turn lowers average yield per hectare. SSP being the cheapest source of phosphorus presents the alternative for reducing the nutrient imbalance of soil as it is a multi-nutrient fertilizer containing additional sulphur and calcium which improves the quality and fertility of the soil. An increasing number of farmers are using these fertilizers, and the numbers of manufacturing units is highest in India. But still market for them not well developed, and its use has still not spread uniformly because lack of awareness and proper promotion. This paper explores the farmer's perspective about Uttam Super a SSP fertilizer of Chambal fertilizers and Chemicals Limited, its usage status and existing promotional strategy in the area. This study will also recommend a proper promotional strategy for adoption of Uttam Super in area studied. The research was carried out three districts of South Bihar namely Rohtas, Kaimur and Aurangabad. Descriptive research was done to explore farmer's perspective with the help of structured questionnaire.

Index Terms- Uttam Super, SSP(SINGLE SUPER PHOSPHATE), Chambal Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited

I. Introduction

Indian fertilizer industry is supporting Indian agriculture since the era of green revolution (1960s). It has considerably grown in the last 50 years and has now emerged as the second largest consumer of fertilizers next only to China and third largest producers of phosphatic and nitrogenous fertilizers, next to China and USA with 57 large scale fertilizer units and 64 of medium and small scale industries working in the country.

Urea consumption has witnessed a growth rate of 3% over the period FY07 to FY15 and is expected to grow at a stable growth rate of 2-3% in the medium term, driven by farmer preference for urea and retail price differential with other fertilizers**.** Farmers use urea, a rich source of nitrogen, as its price is highly subsidised and lower compared to the decontrolled NPK fertilisers like DAP and MOP. Due to excessive use of urea in place of other essential NPK (nitrogenous, phosphoric and potassic) fertilisers the soil health has been continuously deteriorating. And this has a negative impact on agricultural output and farmers' income. There is strong need to check the unbalanced use of fertilisers as it is deteriorating soil health and at the same time impacting agricultural output and farmers' income.

Source-
http://www.icra.in/AllTypesOfReports.aspx?ReportCategory=Fertilizers

The all India demand forecast of fertilizer 2012-13 to 2016-17 according to the working group report on fertilizer industry for twelfth five-year plan shows that the demand for the fertilizer products will increase consistently in the coming years. The growth prospects in SSP is good which itself shows its good potential.

Table 1. Demand forecast of fertilizer products

Year	Urea	DAP	NP/NPKs	SSP	MOP
2013-14	31192	11784	10577	4682	4343
2014-15	32029	12002	10861	5091	4492
2015-16	32858	12212	11142	5513	4643
2016-17	33677	12413	11420	5948	4793
2017-18	33754	12764	11841	6476	4934

Source:*http://www.krishijagran.com/corporate-watch/Industry-Profile/2014/12/Indian-Fertilizer-Sector-at-A-Glance*.

This table shows the Fertilizer demand supply scenario of FY2015. The Indian Fertilizer companies produced around 37 million tons of fertilizer in the FY2015 with respect to demand to 59.9 MT which shows supply has lagged demand to a significant extent, resulting in high dependence on imports.

Table 2. Fertilizer production in India

Fertiliser	Demand(MT)	Production(MT)	Number of production Units in India
Urea	31.0	23.5	30
DAP	11.2	5.4	12
NPK	13.2	8.1	19
MOP	4.5	-	-
Total	59.9	37	-

Source-
https://www.indiaratings.co.in/upload/research/specialReports/2015/2/6/indra06FY16%20Outlook%20-%20Fertilisers.pdf

As of now, the country has achieved 80% self-sufficiency in production capacity of urea with the result India could substantially manage its requirement of nitrogenous fertilizers through the indigenous industry and imports. Similarly, 50% indigenous capacity has developed in respect of phosphatic fertilizers to meet domestic requirements. However, the raw materials and intermediates for the same are largely imported. As for potash (K), since there are no viable sources/ reserves in the country, its entire requirement is met through imports.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Boxer and Wensely (1986) have advocated that managers within an organization must develop the organization's promotional strategy in response to the competitive environment and organizational performance.

Levlanc and Nguyen (2001) has established that corporate image is established by elements of the company's identity, reputation , physical facilities, service quality, price offered and delivering the service.

Philip et al (2009), the upshot is many consumer packaged goods companies feel they are forced to use more sales promotions then they wish.

III. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

This study would help-

- To determine the position of Uttam super with respect to other SSP fertilizer brands.
- To identify the perception of farmers and retailers towards Uttam super.
- To identify the problems and needs of the farmers and retailers regarding use of Uttam Super.
- To identify the effective promotional tool for enhancing the use of Uttam super.
- To formulate a proper promotional strategy for enhancing the acceptability of Uttam super.

IV. OBJECTIVES

The present study was proceeded with following four important objectives

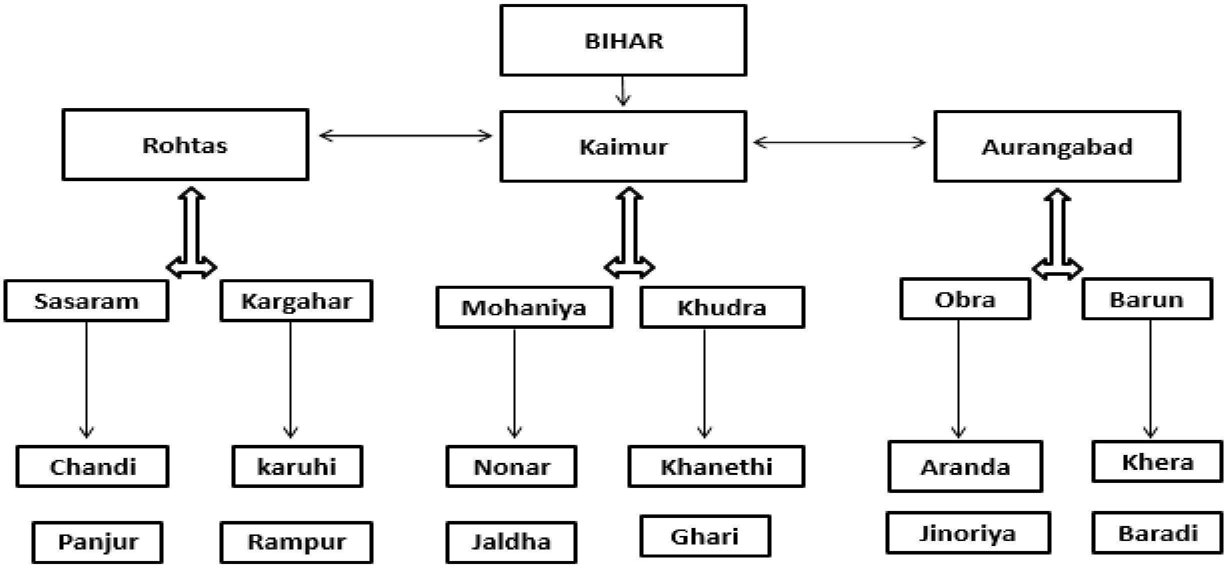
- To assess the market share of Uttam Super and other competitors in Single Super segment.
- To determine perception of farmers and retailers regarding Uttam Super
- To identify strengths and weakness of Uttam Super
- To suggest a promotional strategy for enhancing the sale of Uttam Super

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A multistage sampling was done to survey the retailers and farmers. Firstly judgmental sampling was done for selection of potential districts, blocks on the basis of sales of Uttam super. From each district, 2 potential blocks and from each block 2 villages were selected. In second stage 10 farmers were selected from each village on the basis of convenience. Fig. 1.4 shows the sampling procedure adopted in the research. Both primary and secondary data were collected for the study. Primary data were collected through personal interview using pre-structured questionnaire from the sample size was 60 retailers and 120 farmers of the selected villages and retailers. The secondary data regarding district wise sale of companies were collected from mobile fertilizer monitoring system and sales data of Chambal Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited (CFCL).

3.3.2 Sampling procedure

Fig 1.4: Selected potential districts, blocks and villages



3.3.3 Analysis of data

The data were analysed using simple mathematical and statistical tools. The results have been presented using tables, bar graphs, columns and pie charts. Garrett ranking technique was used to analyse preferred factor of purchasing by farmers and most effective promotional activity in the view of farmers. On the basis of observations and findings from retailers and farmers regarding 5Ps' and various other parameters of Uttam Super, major strengths and weakness were identified. On the basis of primary and secondary data collection after a thorough study of factors influencing sale of Uttam Super, strategy was formulated for suitable promotional activities in the area of study.

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

6.1 Present status of SSP fertiliser companies in the study area

There were almost 8 companies in study area with whole range of fertilizer products. Among them CFCL, TCL, IPL, Indian phosphate ltd., SFC Asian Fertilizer, Sai fertilizer, CIL Raibareilly and CIL Udaipur had shown their prominence in the SSP fertilizer segment. The share of Uttam Super accounts for 48 per cent of the total market size of 7130 MT followed by TCL which is 28 per cent. The total market of Rohtas is 8066 MT of which the share of CFCL is 5055 MT (48%) followed by TCL with 1857 MT(28%). Market size of Aurangabad is second with a market share of 4198 MT followed by Kaimur with 2621 MT. Chambal Fertilisers and Chemicals Limited has the largest market sales of 7130 MT followed by TCL (4110 MT), Indian Phosphate ltd. (1452 MT), IPL (843 MT), SFC Asian (1260 MT) and CIL Raibareilly and CIL Udaipur at 20 MT each. The share of Uttam super largely depends on the strategy of company push in the market and certain other seasonal factors like demand, price and availability.

Table 3: Area wise sale of SSP fertilizer by different fertilizer companies

S.No.	Company	Rohtas	Kaimur	Aurangabad	Total
1	TCL	1857	1077	1176	4110
2	CFCL	5055	1011	1064	7130
3	IPL	626	63	154	843
4	Indian phos	478	407	504	1452
5	SFC Asian			1260	1260
6	Sai Fertilizers			20	20
7	CIL Raibareilly			20	20
8	CIL Udaipur	50			50
SALES TOTAL		**8066**	**2621**	**4198**	**14885**

Source: http://164.100.128.10/mfmsReports/GenCompanySaleDashboardListing

Table 4.3 shows that in the last three years the growth of SSP is good in Rohtas, Kaimur and Aurangabad. In the entire study area, the farmers were getting aware of balanced fertilizer usage having different grades of nutrient mix including SSP and its benefits to the crop growth and development. Therefore, in the three years, sale of SSP has captured the tremendous growth. The sale of SSP in Rohtas registered a growth of 37 % over the last year followed by Aurangabad and Kaimur with 35 and 28 percent respectively.

Table 4: Total Sale of SSP fertilizer in different districts

S. No.	District	Product	Sales (MT)			% Increase (2013-15)
			2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	
1	Rohtas	SSP	1770	5883	8066	37
2	Kaimur	SSP	1025	2035	2621	28
3	Aurangabad	SSP	502	3099	4198	35

Source: http://164.100.128.10/mfmsReports/GenCompanySaleDashboardListing

6.2 FARMER'S PROFILE

This objective of the project is to study the perception of farmers regarding Uttam Super and for that psychographics and demographics of farmers is one of the necessary component. In survey following results has been found. Majority of farmers (29%) belonged to small land holding (1-2 ha)followed by 27% of marginal farmers (<1 ha), 21% of medium farmers(>2-4 ha), 13% of large farmers (>10 ha) and 10% of semi-medium farmers (>4-10 ha). Literacy level of respondent was low as mostly farmers had only primary education and out of 120 farmers, 24 farmers (20%) were illiterate, 36 farmers (30%) were primary educated, 18 farmers (15%) were secondary followed by 30 farmers (25%) and 12 farmers (10%) who were senior secondary and graduate, respectively. Large numbers of farmers (42%) were of medium age group (35 to 45 years old) followed by the age group of 45-55 yrs. (29%) and only 21% were young farmers (20-35 yrs.) and remaining 8% were of old people who are above 55 yrs. Young and medium age farmers have ability to take risk, were more innovative and had high motivation level; they generally did the innovation by using the new things in their fields. The old farmers were stick to their traditional agricultural practices. Wheat and rice were the main crops which were grown by all the farmers in this area. The other main crops were sugarcane mustard, vegetables and pea. Few farmers grew maize. Crop pattern helps in deciding the best suitable time for advertising. It is necessary to calculate appropriate time of promotional activity to insure the maximum gathering of farmers and it requires for the scheduling of the demonstrations.

6.3 FARMER'S PREFERENCES AND PERCEPTION ABOUT UTTAM SUPER

All the surveyed farmers use fertilizers. It shows today's scenario of farming that fertilizers are an essential part of farming and which shows a tremendous business opportunity for fertilizer sector.

6.3.1 PREFERENCE OF FARMERS REGARDING DIFFERENT SSP FERTILIZER BRANDS

Survey reveals that the majority of the farmers i.e. 56 (46%) out of 120 farmers were preferring Tata Paras and 38 (32%) of the farmers preferred Uttam Super followed by other brands whose brand name is not so much popular among farmers and least preference was of IPL with merely 7% brand preference. The primary reason for maximum brand preference of Tata Paras beside largest market share of CFCL is its robust brand image due to its old presence and awareness campaigns of Tata Paras about its dosage and use. The brand preference of SSP in three districts where from responses of 40 farmers from each district were taken. Uttam super has maximum preference in Rohtas while Tata Paras is the preferred brand in Kaimur and Aurangabad districts. Responses also showed that SSP of IPL is least preferred in all the three districts on account of less availability and poor quality.

6.3.2 SOURCE OF INFORMATION OF FERTILIZERS

Majority (62%) of the farmers got the information of fertilizers from their dealers followed by fellow farmers (24%) . Small and marginal farmers also followed large farmers who are using a brand and are getting good results out of it and the same is communicated to the other small farmers. Rest 14% of the farmers were are influenced by promotional activities of companies. It is because of the less reach of companies to the farmers of the area.

6.3.3 STATUS OF AWARENESS OF UTTAM SUPER

Only 56% of the farmers were found aware with Uttam Super which shows that farmers are quite aware about Uttam Super but still percentage is very less than anticipated.

6.3.4 IMPORTANT FACTORS AFFECTING BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF FARMERS

Garrett ranking when applied for the factors considered by the farmers while purchasing SSP reveals that quality was an important factor determining the purchase. Quality of fertilizer was taken in terms of uniform particle size non dusty along with good results. The second most important criteria found was the past experience of farmers for the brand or the image that the farmer have in their minds regarding brand. Easy availability which is ranked third by the farmers has emerged as one of the most important factor considered while purchasing because it easy access to fertilizer saves farmers' time and money and he do not have to go far to purchase it whereas packaging, promotion and price were ranked fourth, fifth and sixth, respectively. Pricing has been ranked sixth by the farmers because the most of the brands in the study area has competitive pricing except Tata Paras which is costlier than other SSP brands.

Table 5. Garrett ranking of different fertilizer purchasing factors of farmers

Factor	Rank given by farmers								
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**Garrett score**	**Mean Score**	**Rank**
Quality	48	31	18	9	8	6	11006	91.71	1
Experience	10	11	14	13	20	52	10855	90.85	2
Easy Availability	28	42	17	14	9	10	10662	90.45	3
Packaging	8	4	30	56	20	2	10618	88.48	4
Promotion	15	17	43	14	10	21	10468	87.23	5
Pricing	26	21	16	15	34	8	10332	86.14	6
Garrett Table Value	**96**	**92**	**89**	**86**	**84**	**83**			

6.3.5 SATISFACTION LEVEL OF FARMERS FOR UTTAM SUPER

Survey also determined the satisfaction level of farmers regarding 5 P's (product, price, place, promotion and packaging) of Uttam Super which makes it clear that the farmers were satisfied with the granule quality, results of Uttam Super in field, pricing and its availability which is timely and adequate but the farmers are dissatisfied with the promotional aspect of company and also somewhat from the product packaging which is not strong at par with other brands. Promotion and packaging are the areas which company has to focus more to increase the satisfaction level of farmers.

6.3.6 FARMER'S OPINION FOR PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Garrett mean score of farmers' opinion for the promotional activities is of the highest order for farmer meetings (91.9), whereas for field trials, gifts scheme, wall painting, jeep campaign it is 89.9, 88.21, 87.5 and 86.31 respectively. It shows that farmers consider farmers meeting followed by field trials as very effective tool for promoting the sales of Uttam Super in the area.

Table 6. Preferred promotional activity of farmers

Factor	Score given by farmers							
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Garrett score**	**Mean Score**	**Rank**
Farmer Meetings	54	24	16	15	11	11030	91.9	1
Field trials	18	21	59	15	7	10789	89.9	2
Free Gifts	21	10	20	37	32	10586	88.21	3
Wall painting	10	12	24	42	32	10500	87.5	4
Jeep campaigning	3	14	22	10	71	10358	86.31	5
Garrett Table Value	**96**	**92**	**89**	**86**	**84**			

VII. PERCEPTION OF RETAILERS REGARDING UTTAM SUPER

7.1 BRAND COMPARISON BY RETAILERS

Perception of retailers for different SSP brands was studied in survey through comparison under three heads namely Better than Uttam, At par with Uttam and Worse than Uttam. It was found that the 46 out of 60 retailers claimed Tata Paras as the brand better than Uttam while 29 retailers agree that Indian Phosphate ltd. is at par with Uttam and 41 retailers think of IPL as the brand worse than Uttam. This shows that in the opinion of retailers Tata paras is very effective brand in the area.

7.2 ATTITUDES OF RETAILERS TOWARDS UTTAM SUPER

Retailers were asked about various factors related to product awareness, availability, product packaging, and price about Uttam Super to know their attitudes. It is clear from the table no.7 that the retailers consider Uttam Super as push selling product rather being demanded by the farmers which again calls for the need of promotional activities in the area. Majority of retailers reported that the Uttam super is easily available in the market with satisfactory price and margin. Retailers reported that the product needs to have bright coloured packaging along with enhanced thickness of bag to reduce leakage problem. The partnership quality of Chambal Fertilisers with retailers was also found poor due to excessive pressure of sale on them by the company which will affect the sale of the company in the long run

Table 7. Attitude of retailers regarding various attributes of Uttam Super

Parameter	**Factors**	**Response (%)**
Product	**Push Sale**	**68**
	Moderate	12
	Pull Sale	20
Availability	**Easily Available**	**77**
	Moderately Available	18
	Not Available	5
Product Appearance	Attractive	17
	Neutral	28
	Not Attractive	**55**
Packaging Quality	Strong	15
	Neutral	24
	Weak	**61**
Price	Cheap	33
	Reasonable	**54**
	Costly	13
Retailer Margin	High	20
	Satisfactory	**45**
	Low	35
Partnership Quality	Good	13
	Satisfactory	32
	Poor	**55**
Problem Handling	Good	32
	Satisfactory	**49**
	Poor	19

7.3 EXPECTATIONS OF RETAILERS FROM UTTAM SUPER

Expectations of reatilers was taken from the retailers revealing that 44 out of 60 retailers expected the packaging of Uttam Super should be made bright coloured rather than white because bright packaging looks more fresh than white that looks old due to dust and gives the impression of old material while 39 retailers expect that the Uttam Super should enhance its bag strength in terms of tthickness to eliminate the incresing leakage problems followed by reducing pressure of sale and very few of them expects that the particle size of Uttam Super should be more granule and less dusty.

7.4 IMPACT OF PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES ON UTTAM SUPER

It is seen in the survey that the promtional activities has positive impact on the sales. It is found that 27 (46%) out of 60 retailers agree that the sale of Uttam super will increase up to 100 % while 18 of them agree that the sales of Uttam Super will increase up till 50 % and 10 (16%) retailers reported no increase in the sales. It indicates that the if the promotional activities is doubled then it will have positive impact on the sales of Uttam Super.

7.5 IMPACT OF UTTAM VEER UREA ON SALE OF UTTAM SUPER

It is found in the survey that the availability of Uttam Veer Urea is directly related with sales of Uttam Super as 29 (49%) out of 60 retailers reported that the sales of Uttam Super will somewhat decrease if there is no Uttam Urea while 23(38%) of them reported the drastic decrease of sale of Uttam Super while 8 (13%) of retailers agree to have no impact on the sales. It clearly shows that Uttam urea has good reputataion in the study area which hae positive impact on Uttam Super .

VIII. TO IDENTIFY STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESS OF UTTAM SUPER

For developing promotional strategy for any company not only needs information regarding market potential, current market status of different companies and their strategies but also companies own strength and weakness as well as external threats faced or to be faced by company in time to come is required. Keeping this in mind and the companies' status and perception of the entire respondent regarding CFCL, Strengths and weakness for Uttam Super was clarified which is presented below:

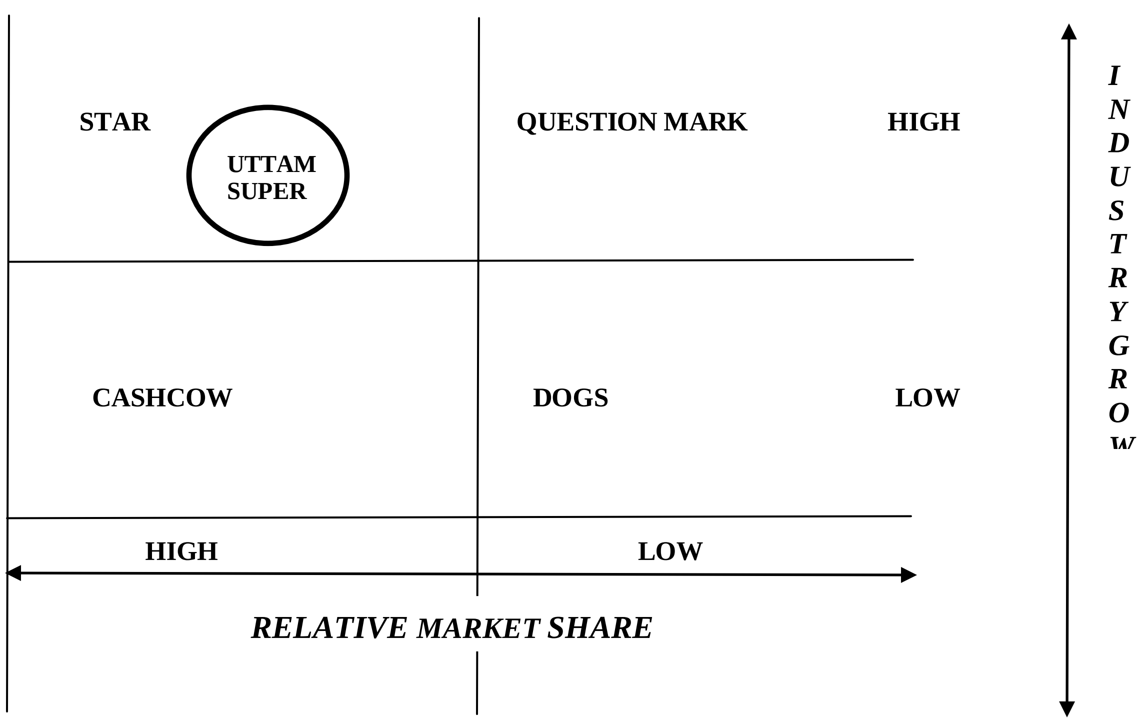
Strengths	***Weakness***
Good Brand name because of good quality and results of Uttam Veer Urea. Pricing is reasonable to famers. Uttam super a superior quality product(Uniform granules and less dusty) Availability of Uttam Super is good in this area.	Excess pressure on retailers for sale of other CFCL products with Uttam Veer Urea.(Push selling) Packaging is very poor and has leakage problems. Less focus on promotion though it is important to create awareness about the brand.

IX. TO SUGGEST A SUITABLE PROMOTIONAL STRATEGY FOR UTTAM SUPER

Boston consulting Group matrix was used for the analysis of strategic position of Uttam Super, a SBU (Strategic Business Unit) of CFCL for formulating a promotional strategy for Uttam Super. From the matrix it is clear that the Uttam super is the market leader in the segment of SSP fertilizer in the study area and industry growth rate is also high which shows that the Uttam Super can generate large amount of cash for the company in the future. So more investment is required in the areas of promotion, dealer schemes and increasing field staff.

Table 8: Brand positioning of Uttam Super using BCG Matrix

Product	**CFCL Market Share**	**Marker Growth Rate**	**Largest Competitor Market Share**	**Relative Market Share**
SSP	48%	0.73	7130 MT	1.0



Uttam Super comes under the star category BCG Matrix which implies that Uttam Super of CFCL is the market leader which shall leads to large cash generation in future. In this phase the company requires large investment to remain in large market share segment especially in promotional activity as well as campaigning. Good packaging coupled with good margin/discount to retailers can lead to more sales.

9.1 PROMOTIONAL STRATEGY FOR UTTAM SUPER

The core business of CFCL is from Urea, DAP, SSP and MOP which are bulk fertilizers but the focus is very less towards promotion in the study area, hence the channel partners usually complain about push selling, less field activities and no promotional campaigning. To promote the product and spread awareness in farmers of the benefits of using Uttam Super over DAP, NPK or other substitutes, the promotion tool has to be designed to create acceptability of Uttam Super in the long run.
As study indicated that well organized farmer meetings is the 1st preference of farmers. So, farmer meeting should be organized frequently with systematic field trails to show them the benefits of using Uttam Super over other SSP brand, well before the starting of kharif and rabi season followed by wall paintings and small farmer meetings during the cropping period to provide technical guidance to farmers on the problems faced by them. Early promotion before starting of the season will motivate them to use Uttam Super during cropping season get benefited by it. The other promotional activities includes audio visual programs, jeep campaigning, wall paintings and gifts distribution to farmers like calendars, diaries etc. Retailers shall be motivated through offering lucrative offers such as more margin than other companies by providing cash discounts and other seasonal rebates so that they will enhance the sale by recommending the product to the farmers. as clearly shown in table below

Table 9: Suggested promotional strategy

Promotional Activities	**Promotion Period**	**Target Season**	**Major Crop**
Farmer meetings, Field trails, Jeep campaign, Leaflet Distribution, Free gift distribution, Audio Visual programs	March, April and May	Kharif	Rice
	October and November	Rabi	Wheat
Wall Paintings, Small farmer meetings	Cropping period	Kharif/Rabi	Rice/Wheat

X. CONCLUSIONS

The study revealed that potential in Rohtas, Aurangabad and Kaimur districts for fertilizer products is very high. Sale of SSP has shown a significant increase of 35 percent from 2013-14 to 2014-15. Thus, in coming few years it will be a potential market for sale of different fertilizer products. Uttam Super has a market share of 48 per cent which is mainly due to good availability. The scope of higher market share is bound to increase in the coming years due to brand image and quality. Rohtas district has the biggest sale in the 3 districts for uttam Super. It is seen that quality is the most important factor that influences the farmers purchasing decision coupled with timely availability followed by good packaging, promotion and reasonable price. Further, farmer meeting and field trails has emerged as useful promotional activities as it is noted that awareness level for Uttam Super was found merely 56%. Retailers considered the sale of Uttam super has push sale and packing needs to be improvised in terms of attractiveness and strength. The company also needs to work to improve its service efficiency to satisfy the retailers and to promote the sale for the products. Uttam Super emerged as the market leader of the study area and to remain the leader and to harvest the full potential of the area, the company needs to focus on the promotional activities, according to the suggested promotional strategy.

XI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The company should also adopt following measures to maintain its leadership in the market.

Adoption of pull strategy:

As per the observation in the study area the the push selling of the company products with Uttam Veer Urea which is hampering the partnership quality with retailers, and in the years to come if urea is decontrolled then it will increase the abundance import of urea which can increase the competition in the market. So company should adopt pull strategy instead of push strategy for the marketing of the products which will involve increased field activities and developing a retailer's centric approach in terms of resolving their problems they face when dealing with the company for gaining higher market share as retailers are very important source of awareness for the farmers.

Improve packaging

Study has shown that retailers and farmers are very much disappointed with the packaging of Uttam Super as leakage problems are higher in CFCL product packets while other competitors who are selling their product on the sidelines of attractive and robust packaging. So it has become very essential to make some necessary changes in the form of bright colored packaging which makes it attractive and quality product while double stitching is important to erase leakage problems in packaging.

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