IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING IN THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR IN INDIA

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Abstract: -

Social media marketing has become a transformative tool in the Indian agriculture sector, facilitating direct communication channels between farmers, agribusinesses, and consumers. This study explores the impact of social media marketing on agricultural practices, market access, and farmer empowerment. Through a comprehensive literature review and case studies, the study highlights how platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube have enabled farmers to access information on weather forecasts, market prices, and other best agricultural practices. Additionally, social media has facilitated the direct marketing of agricultural products, thereby reducing dependence on traditional middlemen and improving profit margins for farmers. Additionally, social media campaigns have increased awareness of government programs and subsides, thereby improving farmers' participation in social programs. For this purpose, primary data was collected from 140 respondents, Data was tabulated and analyzed with the help of statistical tools to achieve the objectives of the study.

Keywords: -Social Media Marketing, Impact, Farmers, Agriculture.

Introduction

Social media is one of the most important elements of information and communication technology (ICT). It can be a generic term for various websites and applications that specialize in communication, interaction, content sharing, and community contributions. It also raises awareness about the various developments taking place in agriculture and the allied agricultural sector, provides information, knowledge and ideas within the agribusiness community, and strengthens Strong relationships between the agribusiness community by discussion. The hottest questions and issues in the agricultural sector. The agricultural sector is a very important sector in India. The majority of people depend directly and indirectly on agriculture and related sectors. Nowadays, information is becoming an important part of today's virtual world. Social media is one of the very important ways to provide necessary information to all social media users. It is a digital network used to share videos, audio files, opinions, ideas, various content and personal massage information with each other. Currently, social networks play an important role in agricultural extension due to many advantages such as a very cost-effective method, reaching a large number of people, users creating information content, discussing issues. Easily. accessible via smartphone and brings together all stakeholders on Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and WhatsApp. They are used to share useful information about agriculture with the agribusiness community.

Statement of the Problem

Technological advancements have dramatically changed the marketing landscape for products and services. Today, many businesses are increasingly turning to social media marketing due to its many benefits, including cost-effectiveness, time efficiency, affordability, and flexibility. However, in the agricultural sector, there is still a significant lack of awareness among farmers about the potential benefits of digital marketing to sell their products. This study aims to explore the views of farmers and agricultural agents, assess their level of awareness, and evaluate the positive and negative impacts of social media marketing in the agricultural sector. By considering these aspects, we can better understand how to effectively leverage digital marketing strategies for the benefit of farmers and improve the marketing efficiency of agricultural products.

Review of Literature

The adoption of social media platforms in Indian agriculture is on the rise. According to Gupta and Sharma (2018), platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube have become popular among farmers to access market information, connect with buyers, and share farming techniques. This adoption is facilitated by the growing penetration of smartphones and affordable Internet services in rural India (Kumar & Singh, 2020). Social media marketing has significantly improved market access for Indian farmers. A study by Jain and Tiwari (2019) highlights that farmers using social media platforms can connect directly with urban consumers, bypass traditional middlemen, and get better prices for their products. This direct interaction also promotes transparency and reduces market inefficiencies.

Social media serves as a platform for knowledge sharing and capacity building among farmers. The study by Patel et al. (2017) note that platforms such as WhatsApp groups allow farmers to exchange information about best practices, weather forecasts, pest control, and government programs. This collective learning improves productivity and resilience in the agricultural sector. Despite its benefits, social media marketing in agriculture faces challenges. According to Singh and Rani (2021), concerns about digital literacy, unreliable Internet connectivity, and privacy concerns hinder widespread adoption, especially among large farmers year old.

Additionally, the quality and reliability of information shared on social media platforms can vary, affecting the decision-making process. The role of policymakers in facilitating effective social media marketing strategies for agriculture cannot be overemphasized. Sharma and Kumar (2019) emphasize the need for government support to enhance digital literacy, invest in rural connectivity infrastructure, and regulate online agricultural markets to ensure fair practices and consumer confidence.

Objectives of the study

To know the Socio-Demographic profile of the respondents

To study the Awareness level of social media marketing methods among farmers.

To examine the impact of social media marketing in the agriculture sector.

Methodology

The present study examines the impact of social media platforms on the agricultural sector in India. The researcher collected information including demographics, land ownership size, assets held, main sources of income, social media usage patterns, and respondents' perceptions of the benefits of the network society in a chosen field of inquiry. This study uses exploratory and analytical research methods. Primary data were collected exclusively through self-structured Google forms, personal interviews, and observational methods. Primary data collection focused on the Karnataka District. Google Forms were distributed to farmers via email, Facebook, and WhatsApp. However, the researcher eventually collected responses from 140 people, mainly from the state of Karnataka.

Analysis and Finding

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Demographics		No. Of. Respondents	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	102	72.86
	Female	38	27.14
Age (in year)	18-25	9	6.43
	26-40	60	42.86
	41-50	59	42.14
	Above 50	12	8.57
Education Qualification	No Formal Education	65	46.43
	SSLC	20	14.29
	PUC	43	30.71
	Degree level	8	5.71
	Others	4	2.86
No. Of Members In A Family	2	0	0.00
	3	30	21.43
	4	60	42.86
	Above 4	50	35.71
Family Monthly Income	Below 10,0000	20	14.29
	10,00001-20,0000	80	57.14
	20,0001-30,0001	12	8.57
	30,0001-40,0000	8	5.71
	Above 40,0000	20	14.29

Source: Primary Data

The demographic profile of the respondents in the study on the impact of social media marketing in the agricultural sector in India reveals some important insights. The majority of respondents were male (72.86%) and between the ages of 26-50 (85%), indicating a middle-aged, predominantly male population, typical of the agricultural industry.

Educational attainment varied widely, with nearly half (46.43%) having no formal education and a significant portion (30.71%) having completed secondary education (PUC). Family size tends to be medium to large, most families have 4 or more members (78.57%). Income distribution shows that the majority of respondents (57.14%) have a monthly household income between ₹10,0001 and ₹20,0000, indicating a moderate economic status. These results imply that social media marketing strategies in the agricultural sector should focus on middle-aged male farmers, using simple, visual content suitable for different educational levels. and emphasize profits to appeal to their financial considerations.

Understanding these demographics can help design more targeted and effective social media marketing campaigns to attract this specific audience in the agricultural sector.

Table 2: Awareness of Social Media Platforms

SL No.,	Sources of Awareness about Social Media Platforms	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Self-Knowledge	10	7.14
2	Agriculture Product dealers	70	50.00
3	Advertisements in TV and News Papers	20	14.29
4	Friends and Relative	40	28.57

Source: Primary Data

The agriculture industry revealed that the main source of awareness is agricultural retailers, with 50% of respondents learning about social media through them. This highlights the important role these resellers play as trusted intermediaries that can influence farmers' adoption of new technology. Friends and relatives were the second largest source, accounting for 28.57% of respondents, emphasizing the importance of social networks and word of mouth in the farming community. Traditional media, including television and newspapers, contributed 14.29% of awareness, suggesting that although they have less impact than personal interactions, these channels still provide the necessary display. Self-knowledge was the least common source at 7.14%, suggesting that independent exploration of social media platforms is relatively rare among these farmers, possibly due to their level of knowledge. Knowledge and digital resources are limited. Overall, the analysis shows that effective social media marketing strategies in the agricultural sector should focus on leveraging the influence of product agents and social networks, while also using social media. traditional media to reach a broader audience.

Table 3: Land-wise Farmers Classification

SL No.,	Size of Land wise classification	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Less than 2.5 acre	80	57.14
2	2.5- 5 Acre	22	15.71
3	More than 10 Acre	38	27.14

Source: Primary Data

Classification of farmers based on the size of their land ownership, as presented in Table 3, provides insight into the distribution of land ownership among respondents. The majority of respondents, 57.14%, own less than 2.5 acres of land. This suggests a predominance of small-scale agriculture, reflecting a significant segment of farmers who may have limited resources and face greater challenges in adopting new technologies, including social media marketing Farmers owning 2.5 to 5 acres account for 15.71%. of the respondent.

This group represents medium-sized farmers, who may have slightly greater resources and greater capacity to invest in innovative agricultural techniques and marketing strategies than small. Finally, 27.14% of respondents owned more than 10 acres. terracotta. These large-scale farmers may have more resources and better access to technology, potentially making them more receptive to social media marketing initiatives. They can also be early adopters of this system and can impact small farmers in their communities.

Table 4: Major Sources of Income for Farmers

SL No.,	Major sources of income of Respondents	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Selling of Food grains	53	37.86
2	selling of vegetables and fruits	26	18.57
3	Poultry	12	8.57
4	Animal Husbandry / Dairy Products	38	27.14
5	Others	11	7.86

Source: Primary Data

Analysis of the main sources of income for farmers, as detailed in Table 4, emphasizes the diversity of economic activities in the agricultural sector. The main source of income for the largest group of respondents (37.86%) is from selling food. This reflects the traditional and widespread dependence on staple crops, which remain the foundation of agricultural livelihoods.

The sale of vegetables and fruit is the main source of income for 18.57% of respondents, indicating that a significant portion of farmers are engaged in gardening. This sector may be more dynamic and market-driven, potentially benefiting more from social media marketing due to its direct interaction with consumers. Livestock and Milk is the main source of income for 27.14% of farmers. This indicates significant participation in livestock-related activities, which can be effectively marketed through social media by demonstrating quality, hygiene standards, and customer satisfaction. Raised poultry, although less common, is the main income for 8.57% of respondents. of the respondent. This niche yet essential segment can leverage social media to reach specialized markets and improve sales through targeted campaigns. Finally, 7.86% of respondents relied on other sources of income, reflecting the diverse and multifaceted nature of agricultural livelihoods. These can include activities such as aquaculture, agritourism or value-added products, which can also benefit from appropriate social media strategies.

Table 5: Usage of Social Media platforms for Agricultural productivity

SL No.,	**Usage of Social media platforms to enhance agriculture productivity and income**	**No of respondents**	**Percentage (%)**
1	Only Facebook	20	14.29
2	Facebook and WhatsApp	42	30.00
3	Only WhatsApp	30	21.43
4	Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube	29	20.71
5	Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, and Instagram	19	13.57

Source: Primary Data

The data in Table 5 on the use of social media platforms to improve agricultural productivity and income shows the diverse interests of farmers. The most commonly used combination is Facebook and WhatsApp, used by 30% of respondents. This shows that both platforms are highly valued for their communication and networking capabilities, which are important for sharing information and supporting communities in agriculture. Only WhatsApp is used by 21.43% of respondents, highlighting its importance as a foundational platform. The main tool for direct messaging and group communication between farmers.

WhatsApp's ease of use and widespread adoption make it an essential platform for rapid information dissemination and peer-to-peer support. Facebook usage alone accounts used by 29% of respondents. This shows that some farmers rely solely on Facebook's wide reach and diverse content formats to gain agricultural knowledge and market their products.20.71% of respondents use a combination of Facebook, WhatsApp and YouTube. The inclusion of YouTube shows that these farmers prefer video content to learn new techniques, watch tutorials, and follow agricultural trends.

Finally, 13.57% of people asked to use Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube and Instagram. This group may be the most digitally savvy, leveraging multiple platforms to maximize their reach, access different types of content, and attract a wider audience.

Table 6: Response to the Use of Social Media

SL No.,	Response tothe Use of SocialMedia	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Building a network among different Farmers	36	25.71
2	To Understand and Search New Markets and market prices	32	22.86
3	Searching for New Technology Adaptation in Farming	21	15.00
4	Search for information on how to enhance farming productivity	32	22.86
5	Whether Forecasts	19	13.57
6	Direct Consumer Contact	29	20.71
7	Others	8	5.71

Source: Primary Data

The data in Table 6 on responses to farmers' use of social media highlight some of the key benefits and applications. The most common use, reported by 25.71% of respondents, is to create networks between different farmers. This highlights the role of social media in promoting community, peer-to-peer learning, and collaborative problem-solving.

Additionally, 22.86% of respondents use social media to understand and research new markets and market prices, which helps them make informed decisions about selling products and maximize revenue conversion. A similar proportion of respondents (22.86%) sought information about improving agricultural productivity, suggesting that social media is an important resource for accessing best practices and techniques. innovation techniques, In addition, 20.71% of respondents use social networks for direct purposes.

contact with consumers, reflecting the trend of bypassing traditional intermediaries to sell products directly, thereby improving prices and relationships with customers. Meanwhile, 15% of respondents use social media to search for new technology applications in agriculture, highlighting the platform's importance in spreading awareness of new agricultural innovations. best. Weather forecasts were sought after by 13.57% of respondents, highlighting the need for accurate and timely weather information for planning and risk mitigation. Finally, 5.71% of respondents indicated other uses, such as interacting with agricultural experts, participating in forums, or exploring government programs.

Table 7: Spending time on social media is giving benefits for enhancing agricultural income

SL No.,	Respondents Response On Spending The Time On Social Media Is Giving Benefits For Enhancing Agriculture Income	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly Agree	85	60.71
2	Agree	32	22.86
3	Neutral	8	5.71
4	Disagree	2	1.43
5	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00

Source: Primary Data

Table 7 presents respondents' responses regarding the benefits of spending time on social media for enhancing agricultural income. The data reflects a strong consensus among farmers regarding the positive impact of social media engagement on their income generation. The majority of respondents, accounting for 60.71%, strongly agree that spending time on social media yields benefits for enhancing agricultural income. This indicates a widespread recognition of the value that social media platforms bring to agricultural practices, whether through knowledge sharing, market access, or networking opportunities.

Additionally, 22.86% of respondents agree with this sentiment, further affirming the positive correlation between social media usage and income enhancement in agriculture. While not as emphatic as the majority, this group still acknowledges the advantages of leveraging social media for agricultural purposes. A small proportion of respondents (5.71%) express a neutral stance, suggesting a degree of uncertainty or ambivalence towards the impact of social media on agricultural income. However, the low percentage indicates that the majority of farmers have formed opinions on the matter, leaning towards recognizing the benefits of social media engagement. Furthermore, only a minimal percentage of respondents (1.43%) disagree with the notion that spending time on social media contributes to enhancing agricultural income. This shows that the level of skepticism about the effectiveness of social media in agriculture is relatively low among the farmers surveyed.

Findings

In recent days farmers can market their agricultural products through IKISAN, NAPANTA APP, NAFED, e-Choupal, AGMARKNET& other e-market platforms known as the "e-NAM which was launched by our Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Many of the Indian villages are deprived of regular supply of electricity and the internet connectivity is still a farfetched dream for these areas but still there are various success stories where Facebook, the famous social networking site has helped rural people to make a difference in their lives.

The demographic profile shows a significant male majority among respondents, indicating a gender disparity in the agricultural sector.

The largest age groups are 26-40 and 41-50 years, suggesting that middle-aged individuals are more engaged in agriculture and potentially more receptive to social media marketing efforts.

A substantial portion of respondents (46.43%) has no formal education, highlighting potential challenges in digital literacy and technology adoption.

The majority of respondents have a moderate family income between ₹10,0001-20,0000, indicating limited but significant financial resources for investment.

A majority of respondents (57.14%) own less than 2.5 acres of land, indicating the prevalence of small-scale farming in the surveyed population.

WhatsApp and Facebook are the most commonly used platforms for enhancing agricultural productivity, reflecting their popularity and utility among farmers.

Farmers use social media for various purposes, including building networks, market research, accessing information, and direct consumer contact, demonstrating its multifaceted value in agriculture.

The majority of respondents strongly agree (60.71%) that spending time on social media benefits agricultural income, indicating a widespread belief in its efficacy.

Only a minimal percentage of respondents (1.43%) disagree with the notion that social media contributes to enhancing agricultural income, indicating low skepticism towards its effectiveness.

The survey reflects an increasing trend of digital connectivity and adoption among farmers, suggesting a potential for further integration of technology in agriculture.

Suggestions

Develop simple, visual, and localized educational content to improve digital literacy and awareness among farmers with limited formal education.

Collaborate with agriculture product dealers to leverage their influence and networks for promoting social media usage and adoption among farmers.

Focus marketing efforts on middle-aged farmers, who constitute a significant portion of the surveyed population and are more likely to engage with social media.

Offer cost-effective solutions and financial incentives to accommodate farmers' moderate income levels and encourage adoption of social media marketing tools.

Facilitate online communities and forums to encourage peer-to-peer learning, knowledge sharing, and collaboration among farmers.

Provide real-time market information and price updates through social media platforms to assist farmers in making informed decisions about selling their produce.

Conduct awareness campaigns about the latest agricultural technologies and innovations through social media channels to facilitate technology adoption among farmers.

Integrate weather forecasting services into social media platforms to provide farmers with timely information for planning agricultural activities.

Encourage and facilitate direct marketing initiatives through social media platforms to enable farmers to sell their products directly to consumers, thereby improving profitability.

Conduct regular research and monitoring to understand evolving trends and preferences among farmers regarding social media usage and its impact on agricultural practices.

Conclusions

The advent of social media, which took place almost 20 years ago, has seen its usage skyrocket in recent years thanks to advances in digital connectivity and accessibility equipment. This push is evident at all levels of society, including farmers. As a result, social media has become an influential force driving change in Indian agriculture by modernizing traditional farming methods and empowering farmers across the country. It provides access to critical information, markets, and communities that help improve farmers' productivity, efficiency, and economic outcomes. Even as challenges such as digital literacy and internet connectivity persist, governments, NGOs, and other stakeholders must work together to address these issues to fully realize the benefits of social media in agriculture. The future looks bright with the integration potential of advanced technologies such as AI and blockchain expected to further enhance the role of social media in Indian agriculture. As this evolution continues unabated, we expect an even greater impact on Indian agriculture, leading to innovation-driven sustainability and prosperity in the industry.

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