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SOCIAL MEDIA HELP FARMERS: FOR IMPROVING AGRICULTURE PRACTICES

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ABSTRACT

People use platforms like YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram, Linked In, and other social media platforms to share their expertise and information, create relationships, and interact via audio and video media. We can use audio or video to communicate the information and numbers on this platform. Officers, scientists, extension experts, agronomists, environmentalists, and farmers use social media to share their knowledge, information, and technology in the agriculture field. Interacting on social media, whether it's YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Telegram, or LinkedIn, allows you to make your voice heard and tell your narrative in ways that weren't previously possible. Farmers' connection with experts used to be a difficult task. Even yet, with the help of social media, it is now simple to engage, become aware of, and explain farming techniques for boosting the quality, fertility, and amount of output in any field of agriculture. YouTube and Facebook are the most popular social media platforms for pages and profiles, but WhatsApp is the most popular. YouTube videos are well-known for providing information to apps. WhatsApp is a

convenient social networking platform that is primarily used by linked groups. This article focuses on how social media may help farmers improve their farming operations by giving information, education, entertainment, and awareness campaigns.

Keywords: Agriculture, Farmers, Information, Knowledge Social media

INTRODUCTION

Computer skills are required to use social media; this technology facilitates the exchange of knowledge, thoughts, and information by allowing users to create audio and video communities and networks. Social media refers to web-based communication tools and programmes that enable people to connect, exchange, and transmit their ideas; this allows consumers to access electronic content quickly. Personal evidence, credentials, films, and images, among other things, are included in the content. Users access social media through web-based software or web applications on a computer, tablet, or smartphone, and use it for texting, searching, watching movies, exchanging knowledge and information, and so on. Social media's influence is not only to connect and share information, but it can also be used at anytime, anywhere, and by everyone in the globe; as a result, there are over 3 billion social media users globally. The impact of social media is felt in many industries, including education, entertainment, business, agriculture, banking, hospitals, railways, and so on; in all of these areas, social media benefits agriculture the most. This computer-based technology is utilized all over the world to improve knowledge, connection, awareness, business, marketing, economics, and many other areas. The world is heading in the right direction (Prusty *et al.* 2021).

Agriculture is India's food energy backbone; more than 58 percent of the Indian population is reliant on agriculture services, as illustrated in fig.1. Agriculture, forestry, and fishing provide the principal source of income for Indian society, with agriculture producing around Rs. 19.50 lakh core in gross value added (GVA). In FY20, India's contribution in agricultural and allied sectors in gross value added (GVA) was 17.8% at current prices, with consumer expenditure rebounding by as high as 6.6 percent in 2021 after a pandemic-driven downturn (Lathiya *et al.* 2015). The Indian food industry is poised for significant expansion; each year, the contribution of Indian food industries to the global economy grows due to its enormous potential for value addition and manufacturing, particularly in the food processing industry. India is the world's sixth-largest producer of food and grocery products, accounting for more than 70% of global sales.

The food industry is under a lot of pressure in terms of production and marketing. For raw materials and food processing, the food industry is inextricably linked to agriculture. One of India's most important industries came in fifth place in terms of production, consumption, export, marketing, and future growth. Agriculture is directly linked to the food industry for raw materials, and social media is indirectly linked to advertising items for sailing, marketing, exporting, and commerce. Agricultural commodities exports were US$ 32.12 billion from April 2020 to January 2021. (Prusty *et al.* 2021).

Figure 1: Production of food energy in agriculture field

Farmers can gain knowledge, information, and ideas with the help of social media, and there are opportunities to reach true experts, such as researchers, scientists, agronomists, environmentalists, and others. With the help of these best people, farmers have increased their production, quality, quantity, and business, and there are opportunities to form key partnerships, reach a wider audience, and reach specialists in the agricultural field.

Direct agriculture's relationship to social media, as well as its function in assisting agriculture, is important these days. It enables social interactions on e-commerce platforms by facilitating communication with farmers. Its ability to collect data allows it to concentrate on agriculture, research, and development for the benefit of society. It aids in the promotion of agriculture services by allowing them to share their knowledge, ideas, and development with farmers in order to promote sustainable agriculture practises. Furthermore, through social media-linked loyalty programmes, social media can aid in the development of ties with agribusiness. The fundamental purpose of social media is to share content, data, proof, and information while also raising awareness. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, and other social media platforms are the most popular among farmers. They provide updates about field preparation activities, seeds sowing process, harvesting, post-harvesting, storage, advertising agricultural output, market information, and

answering problems of farmers if it is related to their recognized areas, in addition to using social media on a personal level. Traditional media and social media are significantly different. To share information, social media users create groups, pages, communities, and blogs. They also trade and buy agricultural commodities in this group. It can be accomplished via sending photographs, pictures, links, movies, and other media. The sale of farmer's produce and the establishment of a network are aided by this information exchange. Agricultural marketing is covered in a lot of blogs (Bhalchandra and Deshmukh, 2017). Young farmers have a stronger belief in the use of social media in farming. They can use YouTube, Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram, and other social media platforms to share their ideas, expertise, and information, as well as like, remark, be aware of, and influence others with their thoughts. On YouTube, Facebook, and LinkedIn, they look for more information. The most popular apps among farmers are YouTube and WhatsApp.

Use of social media in India

According to statistics from 2021, India's population has expanded to 1.39 billion people. As a result of the increasing population, internet usage has surged in the previous two years as a result of the Covid -19 pandemic emergency. In 2021, India will surpass China as the world's second-largest internet user, with an estimated 624.0 million users. Between 2020 and 2021, the number of internet users climbed by almost 8.5 percent, with about 4.8 million individuals joining the internet.

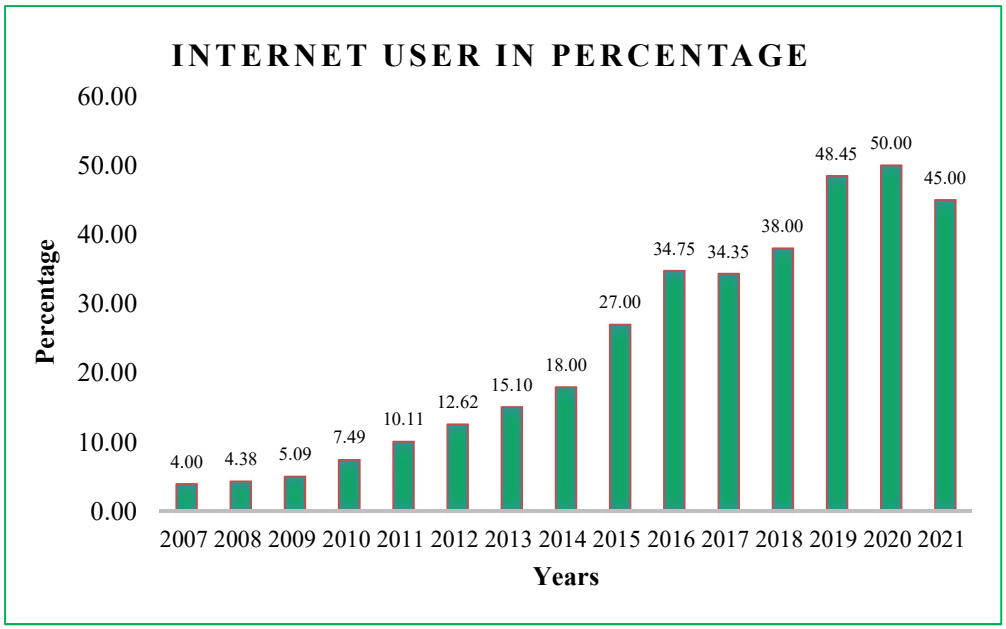

Figure 2: Use of Internet penetration rate in India from 2007 to 2021

Source: [India: internet penetration rate 2021 Statista]

In India, around 445.0 million people use social media; in 2021, the number of people who use social media will have increased by 20%, to over 78 million, compared to 2020. In India, users of social media made up 32.1 percent of the total population. In India, mobile phones are preferred for internet access over other devices such as PCs, laptops, tablets, and so on. According to the Digital: Global Overview Report 2021, more than one billion people use mobile phones to access the internet, and this number has increased by 2.1 percent, to over 23 million in 2021. For start-ups, small businesses, and digital India in India today, the internet is the major mode of communication. Most smart phones are social networking platform compatible, allowing producers to stay in contact regardless of where they are. Many agricultural firms have created apps and Facebook pages to engage with their customers. Moreover, a slew of organisations have launched websites and mobile applications. Many programmes and apps for farmers, researchers, and others have been developed in the agriculture sector using mobile-based Argo advising services; sharing photographs, videos, and audios has also gained popularity among farmers due to its reach across all farm family members. Farmers in developing countries are increasingly using high-end Smartphone's and, more importantly, are aware of the devices' utility in farming, as evidenced by the growing number of apps for crop and weather information and alerts that are compatible with Apple, Android, and Windows operating systems (Jijina and Raju, 2016).

How does it work

The roles of these technologies differ since social media comprises a wide variety of websites and apps. On the other hand, most social networking sites start with a user creating a profile, which typically consists of a name and an email address. After completing their accounts, users may create and share content. A Facebook user who has recently registered an account, for example, can take a photo and submit it to their profile with a description or tag line as well as their location. In addition to supplying material for their own form, social media users may identify other users whose content they want to follow or remark on.

Depending on the sort of social media, a user can "follow" another person, "friend" them, or "subscribe" to their page. On social media, a "feed" is a tool that allows users to scan through material. Social media companies utilise algorithms based on a user's personal data to select what material appears and in what order. The feed will display content from "following" people and corporations who pay to promote their content. Many government authorities maintain official websites, blogs,

and social media groups to help in the transmission of information and the solving of problems that farmers experience in order to increase their ability. Having a YouTube channel and posting content on social media has become a platform for generating money and being famous in a day these days.

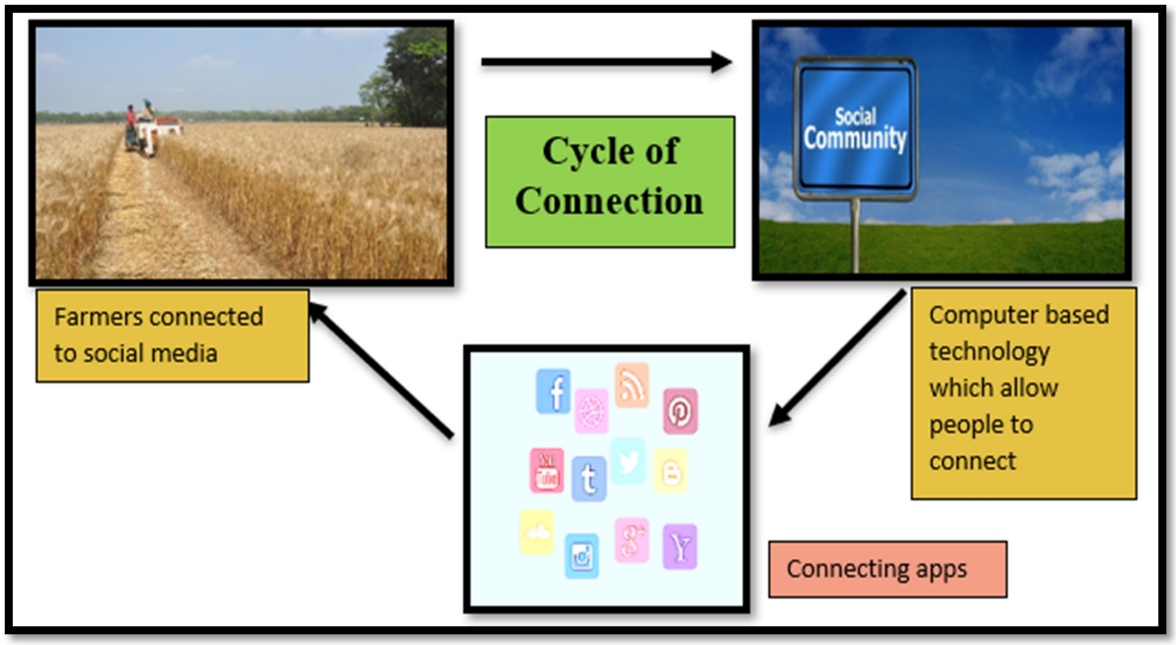

Figure 3: Connection cycle between people and social media

The most popular social media tools are:

These are the most popular internet platforms used worldwide; more than 17 are popular. Still, these seven platforms are mainly used for transform information and awareness mostly ever person are undoubtedly connected to one of these they are:

- **Facebook** is one of the biggest platforms for connecting with people; it has more than 2.70 billion active users in January 2021. You can post updates about activity on your farm, share pictures, and see what friends, celebrities, organizations, and groups are up to. Your Facebook community often consists of people you know in real life.
- **YouTube**: 2.2 billion active users Upload/download videos related
- **WhatsApp**: 2 billion active users Groups related to agricultural marketing.
- **Instagram:**1.2 billion active users
- **Telegram:** 500 million active users
- **Twitter**: 353 million follows agricultural marketing experts, tweets regularly, share information, join Twitter Chats.

- **LinkedIn** is geared toward the professional community. It allows you to network with work colleagues and is powerful for brands and job seekers. You can post your resume, connect with other professionals, and keep updated with industry news. You can follow groups focused on topics relevant to your industry.

Reason for using the internet

- Stay up to date with news and current event
- Find funny and entertainment content
- Fill up spear time
- Stay in touch with what my people are doing
- Shear photos and videos with friends and families
- Research products to buy
- General networking with other people
- Share my opinion
- Network for work
- Connect for knowledge
- Watch and follows Agri events

Advantage of media in Agriculture

On social media, many organizations have official sites, blogs, and groups. It's being able to respond to a question quickly. It saves the farmers' time and money. Farmers receive timely and accurate information since they may communicate directly with agriculture specialists at any time. For example, network supplying firms provide weather reports, soil nutrient level tests, type of soil, seed quality, how to utilize agriculture instruments in the field, optimal pest management and weed control procedures, and other information and data for lower pricing. It makes it easier for farmers to browse more (Prusty *et al.* 2021).

- Provide the correct information for their problems.
- We have improved the efficiency of Agriculture Services.
- Increased farmers' income.
- It improved agriculture productivity.
- It is reduced the digital gap between rural areas and modern cities.

The disadvantage of using social media in Agriculture

- Lack of Authenticity
- Lack of knowledge related to agriculture
- Copy content and ideas from popular channel
- Absences of professionals of higher age
- Location-specific nature of social media
- Misuse of social media

Challenges of Social Media Use in Agricultural Marketing

- Implementation of social media as a tool of agricultural marketing.

- There is limited access to social media because of data, network etc.
- There is a need for training and education about the use of social media in Agri marketing.
- People are less trusted on e-buying and the e-selling of an agricultural commodity on social media.
- All the activities are restricted by time, technology, networks etc.
- The cost of technology use in agriculture is more.

CONCLUSION

On social media, many organisations have official sites, blogs, and groups. It's being able to respond to a question quickly. It saves the farmers' time and money. Farmers receive timely and accurate information since they may communicate directly with agriculture specialists at any time. For example, network supplying firms provide weather reports, soil nutrient level tests, type of soil, seed quality, how to utilise agriculture instruments in the field, optimal pest management and weed control procedures, and other information and data for lower pricing. It makes it easier for farmers to browse more (Prusty *et al.* 2021).

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