Knowledge and Attitude Regarding Social Media as a Source of Information among Farmers of District Kota, Rajasthan

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Authors' contributions

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ABSTRACT

The present study was undertaken to assess the knowledge and attitude of farmers regarding social media in the Kota district of Rajasthan, during the year 2021-22. The study used purposive sampling to select one Block, namely Khairabad and simple random sampling to select four villages from the block. In total four villages were selected for the study, and a total sample of 120 social media users was chosen using proportionate simple random sampling technique. The study revealed that the maximum respondent was middle-aged (42.5%), while farmers (50.8%) had small land holdings. The maximum number of respondents having a medium level of economic motivation, and social media exposure, and about fifty-three percent (52.5%) of the respondents

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have medium level of knowledge about social media. The majority of the farmers (65.8%) have maximum knowledge about social media are very useful but sometimes it helps in spreading wrong information, while less than fifty percent (49.2%) the of farmer have a medium-level attitude regarding social media. Age, Occupation, Educational qualification, Farm power, and Economic motivation are positively and significantly correlated at 0.01% level of probability and Family size, Landholding, social media exposure is positively and Family size, Landholding, social media exposure is significantly at 0.05% level with the knowledge toward use of social media. On the other hand, all the independent variables were significantly and positively correlated with attitude level at 0.01% and 0.05%.

Keywords: Social media; knowledge; attitude level.

1. INTRODUCTION

"Information is necessary for educating the masses on various areas of concern and people will look for information to meet their needs. Various channels relay information that helps audiences to solve their problems and also influences their decisions making. Communication functions in a number of ways to determine group outcomes" [1]. Suchiradipta and Saravanan [2] defined "social media as web-based tools of electronic communication that allow users to personally and informally interact, create, share, retrieve, and exchange information and ideas in any form that can be discussed, archived and used by anyone in the virtual communities and networks".

The two working words "social" and "media" are where the term "social media" comes from. Social refers to interactions between neighbors who share a common interest. Virtual entertainment uses a friendly architecture to transfer data from the source to all collectors. In the agricultural sector, there is growing rate of social media usage amongst actors. Sokoya et al. (2012) opined that "there is a large increase in the utilization of social media among agricultural researchers, professionals, stakeholders and farmers in the agricultural sector. Social media have ensured quick delivery and response to information between the receiver and sender and an effective way of ensuring successful delivery and sustainability of a viable agricultural extension subsector". Mukhtar, et al. [3] revealed that "social media has fostered a fast platform for information dissemination and interactive contact; rivalled by none in this time". "Social media is very different from traditional media" [4]. "Social media is yet another ICT-based tool, once used purely for entertainment, with great potential for knowledge sharing and collaboration in agriculture" [5]. "These ICT devices are relatively easy to use and gaining popularity in the agricultural sector" [2]. "Social media has great potential to be used as a tool of communication and networking for the benefit of the farming community. Social media use for disseminating agricultural information has the potential to bridge the gap created by the shortfall in the farmers' extension ratio. The ratio of extension agents to farm families as recommended by the Food and Agricultural Organization is put at 1:250; this is against 1: 4,882 with 415,030 farm families in Oyo state" (FAO, 2012) "However, only recent studies in the field of learning and innovation in agriculture have started to include social media, a phenomenon that has emerged with the progress towards Web 2.0 technologies and the rise of the internet. Theme 1– Learning and knowledge systems, education, extension and advisory services 13th European IFSA Symposium, 1-5 July 2018, Chania (Greece) enabled mobile phones" [6-10] (Cerkenková et al., 2011; Jespersen et al., 2014; Material et al. 2014; Poppe et al. 2013; Rhoades and Aue, 2010). Social media are a broad term comprising different forms, but the most dominant are social networks like Facebook, and LinkedIn, micro-blogging services like Twitter, and video image-sharing platforms such as YouTube and Vimeo (for an exhaustive overview, see [6] (Murthy, 2012). Facebook was established in 2004 as a social networking site.

Currently, Facebook is the biggest online platform in the world with obvious benefits above other social media. Table 1 shows that different social media user as follow:

Table 1. Social media users

1	Facebook	2.74 Bn user
2	YouTube	2.29 Bn users
3	WhatsApp	2 Bn users
4	Facebook Messenger	1.3 Bn users
5	Instagram	689 Mn users

Facebook is a free online platform where we can create profiles connect with our friends and family online, connect with individuals we don't know, and make friends from all over the world. YouTube is a website for sharing videos. You can make an account on YouTube and publish your material there. Additionally, watch videos based on your interests and needs. You may build a channel on YouTube, attract subscribers, and make money. WhatsApp is a handy use of social media and mostly preferred for related groups (Balkrishna et al. 2017). WhatsApp is a particular kind of online application via which we may establish friendships and build various groups pertaining to various fields, from which we can share new information and produce new things.

Social media is now a mainstream form of communication around the world (Thomas and Michael, 2016). Social media is an effective form of communication around the world, and continue to grow in popularity with an increase in the number of Smartphones. There are now 1.5 billion users of social technology in the world, and that number continues to grow (Chui et al. 2012).

1.1 Social Media Use and Users World Wide

The number of people using social media is rising daily. In 2017, fewer than 2.5 billion individual used social media worldwide, with 11 people using it for the first time every second. On average, consumers use social media for 147 minutes every day, or two hours and twenty-seven minutes.

Table 2 shows the time spent on social media in various countries.

Table 2. Time spent on social media

1	North America	2 hrs. 6 min
2	Africa	3 hrs. 10 min
3	Europe	1 hr. 15 min
4	Asia	2hrs. 16 min
5	South America	3 hrs. 24 min

If we assume that most individuals start using social media at the age of 10, which is what the WHO anticipated in 2019, then the average person will spend a total of more than 3.4 million minutes on social media throughout their lifetime or, six years and eight months. Table 3 demonstrates the average amount of time and users who are active on social media. Social media has been accepted by Indians like a duck to water. The average Indian spend roughly 2.36 hours each day on social media. Due to the expansion of the internet into rural and remote areas, there will be 467 million more social media users in India in 2022. The number of social media users in India has increased to 658 million, or almost 47 percent of the country's entire population.

Table 3. Average time spent by users on social media

S. No	Particular	Daily time spent	Daily active users
1	Facebook	33 minutes	1.9 billion
2	YouTube	19 minutes	122 million
3	Instagram	29 minutes	95 million
4	WhatsApp	28 minutes	100 billion
5	Twitter	31 minutes	206 million

1.2 Objectives

1. To assess the socio-economic profile of the farmer.
2. To understand the knowledge and attitude of farmers toward social media as a source of information.
3. To assess the relationship between knowledge and attitude of farmers with socio-economic profile.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in the Kota district of Rajasthan India in the year 2021-22 to assess the knowledge and attitude of farmers regarding social media as a source of information in Kota district of Rajasthan. Kota district has five blocks namely- Itawa, Digod, Ladpura, Sangod, and Khairabad. In 5 blocks Khairabad block was selected purposively as of maximum respondent Using social media. In Khairabad block there are a total of 114 villages out of which 4 villages were selected randomly for the study namely- Chechat, Morak gaon, Barodiya Kalan, and Chousla gaon. Thus, all 120 social media users constituted a sample for the study by proportionate random sampling method who are using social media. The data was collected by a pre-tested structured interview scheduled through the personal interview method. Statistical tools such as standard deviation, mean, percentage were used wherever required.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Majority (42.5%) of farmers were from the middle-aged group, (55%) of respondents had small family size i.e., up to 6 members. In selected villages (97.5%) were literate while (2.5%) of Illiterate respondent, majority of the respondent were doing agriculture only (70%), with (50.83%) of small farmer had small land holding 1-2 ha, (53.33%) of respondents have medium income (1lakh-2 lakh), It reveals that majority of the respondent, accounting for Nuclear (77.50%) of the total sample, (45.00%) respondent have medium score of information, maximum farmer had medium level of economic motivation (43.33%), accounting for (59.16%) of the total sample had a high level of social media exposure. The findings were similar to the study by Darshan et al. (2017).

Table 4. Socio-economic Profile of the respondents (N=120)

S.no	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
01.	**Age**		
	Young (<28)	44	36.67
	Middle (29-50)	51	42.5
	Old (>50)	25	20.83
02.	**Education**		
	Illiterate	3	2.50
	Primary school	8	6.67
	Middle school	19	15.83
	High school	27	22.50
	Intermediate	41	34.17
	Graduation and above	22	18.33
03.	**Family type**		
	Nuclear	93	77.5
	Joint	27	22.5
04.	**Occupation**	**Main (%)**	**Subsidiary (%)**
	Agriculture labour	0	18 (15%)
	Agriculture only	84 (70%)	12 (10%)
	Caste based occupation	12 (10%)	9 (7.5%)
	Agriculture +Business	10 (8.3%)	5 (4.17%)
	Service (Govt. + Private)	14 (11.6%)	25 (20.83%)
5.	**Land holding**		
	Marginal (Below 1 ha)	35	29.16
	Small (1 to 2 ha)	61	50.83
	Medium (2 to 4 ha)	21	17.50
	Large (4 ha and above)	3	2.50
6.	**Annual Income**		
	Low (1 lakh)	29	24.17
	Medium (1lakh-2 lakh)	64	53.33
	High (above 2 lakh)	27	22.5
07.	**Source of Information (%)**		
	Low (16-19)	28	23.33
	Medium (20-21)	54	45
	High (22-24)	38	31.67
08.	**Farm power (%)**		
	Low (14-15)	37	30.83
	Medium (16)	62	51.66
	High (17)	21	17.51

S.no	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
09.	**Social media exposure (%)**		
	Low (1)	28	23.33
	Medium (1-3)	71	59.16
	High (above 3)	21	17.5
10.	**Family Size**		
	Small (up to 6 members)	66	55.00
	Medium (7-14 members)	52	43.33
	Large (15 and above)	2	1.67
11.	**Economic motivation**		
	Low (6-10)	37	30.83
	Medium (11-14)	52	43.33
	High (15-18)	31	25.83

Table 5. Distribution of respondents based on the Extent of Knowledge

S. No	Statements	Evaluation		Not correct F(%)
		Fully correct F (%)	**Partially correct F (%)**	
1	Social media plays an important role in disseminating information.	63 (52.50)	24	33 (27.50)
2	Social media made it convenient to gather agriculture-related information.	66 (55.00)	31 (25.83)	23 (19.17)
3	You know about all the social media platforms i.e Facebook, whatsapp, Twitter, Instagram, youtube, etc.	36 (30.00)	44 (36.67)	40 (33.33)
4	Using social media for gathering information increases farm productivity.	47 (39.17)	40 (33.33)	33 (27.50)
5	The use of social media helps in experimenting with different techniques in farming which has proved to be quite beneficial	53 (44.17)	31 (25.83)	36 (30.00)
6	Because of social media, you can interact with a large number of people very easily and connects with your peer.	69 (57.50)	41 (34.17)	10 (8.33)
7	It helps in getting market-related information.	56 (46.67)	55 (45.83)	9 (7.50)
8	Social media provides the latest updates to farmers regarding agriculture and farming activities.	67 (55.83)	49 (40.83)	4 (3.33)
9	Getting information from social media is highly cost-effective.	76 (63.33)	41 (34.17)	3 (2.50)
10	Social media provides tools to extension professionals for sharing information and being a part of discussions and debates on extension.	47 (39.17)	49 (40.83)	24 (20.00)
11	Social media is very useful but sometimes it helps in spreading wrong information which misleads farmers.	79 (65.83)	40 (33.33)	1 (0.83)

Table 6. Distribution of respondents on the basis of knowledge

S.No	Categories	Number	Percentage
1	Low	31	25.83
2	Medium	63	52.50
3	High	26	21.67
Total		120	100

Table 7. Distribution of the respondents on the basis of Attitude to the extent of social media practices for agriculture N=120

S. No	Aspects	AG (%)	DG (%)	UD (%)
1.	Social media is a useful educational tool.	98 (81.67)	11 (9.17)	11 (9.17)
2.	I like using different social media platforms and interacting with peers.	80 (66.67)	9 (7.50)	31 (25.83)
3.	Social media is now a mainstream form of communication to grow in popularity with the increase in the number of smartphones, and the ease of use.	71 (59.17)	8 (6.67)	41 (34.17)
4.	Social media becomes a powerful tool that connects a million of people around the world.	85 (70.83)	5 (4.17)	30 (25.00)
5.	Social media reduces the gap between rural areas and	96 (80)	7 (5.83)	17 (14.17)
6.	Social media is revolutionizing the way of business to bringing new ways of communication and exchange of information across the globe.	90 (75.0)	3 (2.50)	27 (22.50)
7.	It helps in reducing social isolation for farmers.	85 (70.83)	5 (4.17)	40 (33.33)
8.	It enables farmers & agripreneurs to meet and network with other farmers, agripreneurs and consumers domestically and globally.	80 (66.67)	8 (6.67)	32 (26.67)
9.	Social Media enables farmers to be part of the conversation surrounding controversial and emotional issues to do with farming practices E.g., animal welfare, genetic modification, and environmental issues.	74 (61.67)	9 (7.50)	37 (30.83)
10.	Social media helps in branding agriculture commodities by free advertisement.	88 (73.33)	6 (5.00)	26 (21.67)

Table 8. Distribution of respondents on the basis of the level of Attitude toward social media

S.No	Category	Number	Percentage
1	**Low**	26	21.67
2	**Medium**	59	49.17
3	**High**	35	29.16
	Total	120	100

Table 9. Relation between profile of respondent with knowledge level toward social media

S.NO	Independent variable	Correlation coefficient
1	Age	0.790*
2	Occupation	0.684*
3	Family size	0.372* *
4	Educational Qualification	0.733*
5	Farm power	0.989*
6	Family type	0.735 *
7	Land holding	0.412* *
8	Annual Income	0.997 *
9	Source of information	0.86*
10	Social media exposure	0.501* *
11	Economic motivation	0.987*

*= Correlation is significant at the 0.01% level probability **= Correlation is significant at the 0.05% level of probability
NS= non-significant

Table 10. Relation between the profile of respondents with the level of attitude towards social media

S.NO	Independent variable	Correlation coefficient
1	Age	0.898*
2	Educational Qualification	0.812 *
3	Farm power	0.992 *
4	Family type	0.741*
5	Occupation	0.215**
6	Family type	0.741*
7	Land holding	0.435* *
8	Annual Income	0.378**
9	Source of information	0.992*
10.	Social media exposure	0.519*
11.	Economic motivation	0.715*

*= Correlation is significant at the 0.01% level of probability
**= Correlation is significant at the 0.05% level of probability
NS= non-significant

The study reveals that 52.50% of the respondents had a medium level of knowledge about social media. A significant proportion of social media respondents, approximately 25.83%, had a low level of knowledge, while 21.67% of the surveyed farmers had a high level of knowledge regarding social media.

Study reveals that (49.17%) of the respondents had a medium level of Attitude towards social media. A significant proportion of social media respondents, approximately (21.67%), had a low level of Attitude, while (29.16%) of the surveyed farmers had a high level of Attitude about social media.

It is observed from the Table 9 that Age, Occupation, Educational qualification, Farm power, Family type, source of information, Annual income and economic motivation are positively and significant at 0.01% level of probability with knowledge of social media respondent regarding information and Family size, Land holding, social media exposure are positively and significant at 0.05%.

It is observed from Table 10 that Age, Educational qualification, Farm power, Family type, Source of information, social media exposure, and economic motivation were significant and positive at 0.01% level of probability with the attitude level of the respondent toward social media as a source of information while Occupation, Landholding, Annual income were significant and positive at 0.05% level of probability.

4. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that most of the respondents in the study area belonged to the Middle age group (28-50), (34.1%) had an Intermediate school level of Education, possessed (50.8%) small size of land holding(1ha-2ha), (77%) of farmers belong to the nuclear family. The respondents were dependent for their livelihood on Agriculture, Labour, Services, and Business. The maximum number of respondents having medium level (43%) economic motivation, (59.1%) social media exposure, and (52.5%) knowledge level in the study area and (49.17%) Attitude level toward social media as a source of information in the study area. Age, Occupation, Educational qualification, Farm power, Family type, source of information, Annual income, and economic motivation are positively and significantly correlated at a 0.01% level of probability with knowledge of social media respondents regarding information and Family size, Landholding, social media exposure are positively and significant at 0.05%. with the knowledge level of the use of social media. On the other hand, all independent variables were positive and significantly correlated with the attitude level toward the use of social media at 0.01% and 0.05% levels.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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