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## A STUDY ON ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN ORGANIC FARMING PRODUCTS MARKETING AND ITS SCOPE IN 21<sup>ST</sup> ERA

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### Abstract

Under the pandemic covid – 19 situation the whole world is more conscious and concentrated on health rather than wealth. Organic foods smart priority becoming the best effective choice for personal and planetary health. So, the consumption of organic products is become a new major trend of 21<sup>st</sup> century at the growth rate of nearly 20 percent per year from 2010. Environmental variations also motivate people to concern more about their health. Therefore, organic products online purchasing rises as a new trend that expand in social media role and significance. Social media is most suitable and best place where millions of persons meet daily for communication and interaction. Organic firms use social media to advertise and sell their product and services. Social media is the new upcoming trend in organic farming which has blogs, microblogs, groups, pages etc. are useful for getting information, suggestions and solving the problems. The present study adopted a descriptive and analytical research and the primary data collection tools were structured questionnaire and in-depth interviews from organic farmers who uses social media. From the analysis it is found that social media is very useful tool in organic farming product marketing because it saves time and cost of the organic farmers for getting information. The current exploratory study was convened to find out the marketing challenges among organic farmers .While YouTube videos are most popular for information getting with applications. WhatsApp, followed Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest and Instagram are the handy use of social media and mostly preferred for related groups.

**Keywords:** social media, organic farming, WhatsApp, Twitter, LinkedIn.

### Introduction

In 21<sup>st</sup> era the whole world is called as world of ‘Social Media’. Social media is the best place where millions of individuals meet daily and so it became an

important market place for firms to advertise and sell their product and services. There are different types of popular social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, WhatsApp etc. are becoming greater ways of sharing information about organic farming product and its marketing. The use of social media in organic farm product marketing is increasing rapidly now days. In India Organic farming is not a new concept as Indian farmers have traditionally tilled their land without the use of chemicals, relying majorly on organic residues including composts and cow dung. Organic farming includes the integration of natural elements such as soil, water, microbes and waste products, forestry and agriculture. It is the ideal method for sustainable use of natural resources that are coming under severe stress due to the increasing requirement of food and feedstock for agriculture-based industry. It is also in line with the Sustainable Development Goal too that aims to 'end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture'. Indian organic farmers will be able to create their place in the global agriculture trade with greater awareness and capacity building in compliance with international standards. The central government had launched two dedicated programs in 2015 to provide a boost to natural, organic and chemical-free farming. The schemes include: Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North East Region (MOVCD) Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY). Social media allows users to communicate directly with the customers, service providers; information sharing centres etc. farmers are using social media to increase their produce at each stage. Social media and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) starts sharing of creation, information and advices for the particular cause. Increasing networking of mobile phones in rural areas, increases two-way communication.

### **What Is Social Media ?**

Social media is new technology based on computer that facilitates communication and the sharing of ideas, thoughts, and information through the building of virtual networks and communities. Here users engage with social media via computer, tablet or smartphone via web-based software or web application, often utilizing it for messaging. The different types of social media. Platforms like YouTube, Facebook, Google, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest were used as powerful tool and connects millions of people globally . The figures for the most popular social media websites as of January 2022 are as follows:

- a) Facebook    b) YouTube    c) Instagram    d) WhatsApp
- e) Facebook Messenger    f) Tik Tok.    g) Twitter    h) LinkedIn
- I) QQ    j) Doyin    k) Sino Weibo

For this paper study purpose there are some following working concepts.

Social media which enable people to create, publish, share, collaborate, discuss and network through a wide range of new, mainly digital, formats and platforms.

Different types of Social media: Blogs, Microblogs (Twitter), Conversational threads, Social Photos, Social Networking (Facebook, LinkedIn), Video Sharing (YouTube). A main benefit of social media in organic marketing is ability to gain wealth of knowledge and ideas, opportunity to establish key partnership, opportunity to reach wider consumers, experts in organic farming field. Media: Internet, Mobile Phones, Networks. Facebook. People have their own profile brand, pages, groups LinkedIn: Connects with professionals, share information related or becomes a resource . In addition to use of social media is on personal basis, they tell their stories of success, failure etc., they also share updates regarding harvesting, post harvesting, promoting organic farming produce, market information, answering problems of farmers if it is related to their known areas. Social media is very different form traditional media. The users of social media are creating their own groups, pages, community, blogs to share information. In this group they are also selling, buying organic farming products. It can be done by sending images, pictures, links, videos etc. This sharing of information facilitates the marketing of organic farmers.

### **Literature Review**

In this section, review of research articles was undertaken which helps to understand the concept and role of social media in organic farming product. Social media overcomes geographical boundaries and creates communities who share common interests. The users also try to find out information from traditional media social media platforms.

**Rhoades and Hall (2007)** noted that there was a large presence of blogs social media in agricultural marketing has a positive impact on the interaction with consumers, the company or brand awareness and sales.

**Conrad Caine Uitz (2012)**.The use of social media in the field of agricultural marketing offers great opportunities for the buying, selling of agricultural commodities.

**Batra & Keller (2016)** studied the integration of new media with more traditional methods and point out the optimal integration of marketing communications is extremely important but faces challenges due to the technological advances of new media, shifting media patterns, and a consumer with divided attentions. Further, the authors conclude that, “Digital media, in particular, offers tremendous potential through their greater versatility and precision, but they also create greater integration challenges.” According to the 2016 Social Media Marketing Report, the top five benefits of digital social media marketing are increased exposure, increased traffic, development of loyal fans, marketplace insight, and generated leads (Stelzner, 2016, p. 17).

### **Objectives**

1. To study role of social media in organic farming product marketing.
2. To study challenges of social media in organic farming product marketing.

3. To suggest various social media and their use.

**Scope of the Study:** The Scope of this research is ultimately to understand many features, advantages of social media marketing. And this research is related to organic farming in Karnataka only.

#### **Role Of Social Media In Organic Farming Products :**

**Advantages:** To know natural activation techniques of soil and the importance of weather. These platforms are self-help support systems that help us help each other. Social networking and knowledge sharing on online platforms have opened up new avenues of opportunity for farmers while providing them tech-based solutions. Social media is also used to lend emotional support to organic farmers under stress. Organic Farmers continuously need information about seeds, methodologies, weather, machinery and etc and hence, social media platforms are one who gives solution for them. It enables smarter farming through opportunities to learn from organic farming agricultural experts. Services such as Digital green , Spoken Kiosk provides audio and video uploads to convey crop information.

#### **Disadvantages**

Overuse of social networks can lead to procrastination and a tendency to waste time. Circulation of false information and getting trapped in them. Not all farmers are educated enough to understand how to use these platforms.

#### **Challenges of Social Media use in organic farming product Marketing**

1. Adoption of social media as a tool of organic farming product marketing.
2. There is a limited access to social media because of data, network etc.
3. There is a need of training and education about use of social media in organic farming marketing.
4. People are less trusted on e-buying, e-selling of agricultural commodity on social media.
5. All the activities are restricted by time, technology, networks etc.
6. Cost of technology use in agricultural marketing is more.

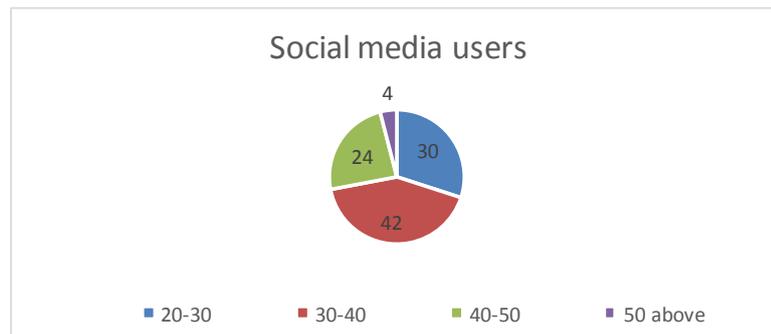
#### **Research Methodology**

The present study is based on descriptive and analytical research over a social media purposively because researcher wants to know the use of social media who meets the objectives and characteristic of the study. This study using the quantitative approach to content analysis to address the research questions and garner information regarding the content of social media posts by organic food companies. Therefore, researcher selected 50 respondents randomly and focus group discussion for the collection of the data from the organic farmers and Structured questionnaire by using electronic media like Google forms , E-Mail etc. While the secondary data has been collected from different sources like select website, books, journals, consumer portals etc

## Results and Findings of the Study

**Table no 1. Social media users**

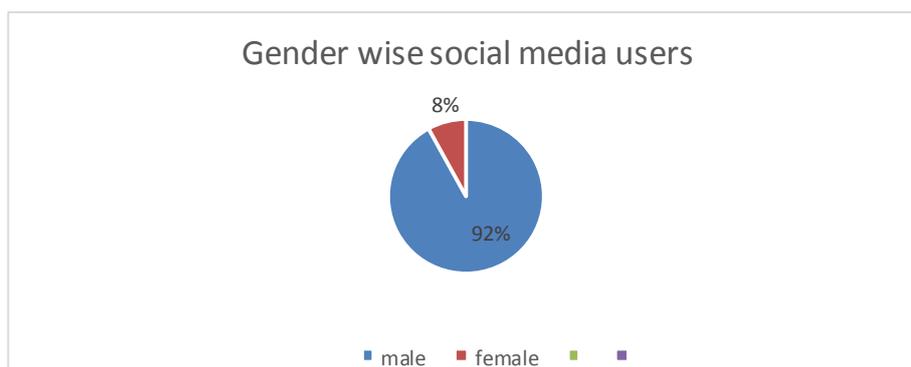
Age (Yrs.)	Frequency	Percentage %
20-30	15	30
30-40	21	42
40-50	12	24
50 above	02	04



In this study the data shows that major organic farmers who are using more social media are from the age group of 30-40 years is 42 %. While below that the age group is 20-30 yrs. i.e., 30%

**Table no. 2 Gender wise social media users**

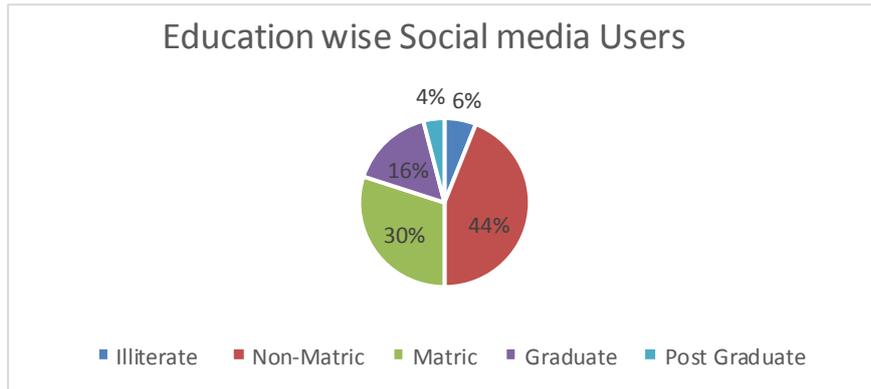
Gender	Frequency	Percentage %
Male	46	92
Female	4	08



The data shows that major respondents are from the gender male i.e., 91% and female respondents are 9 %. While interviewing with organic farmers it is found that male farmers are getting more time to use social media as compared to female farmers.

Education	Frequency	Percentage %
Illiterate	3	6
Non-Matric	22	44
Matric	15	30
Graduate	08	16
Post Graduate	02	4

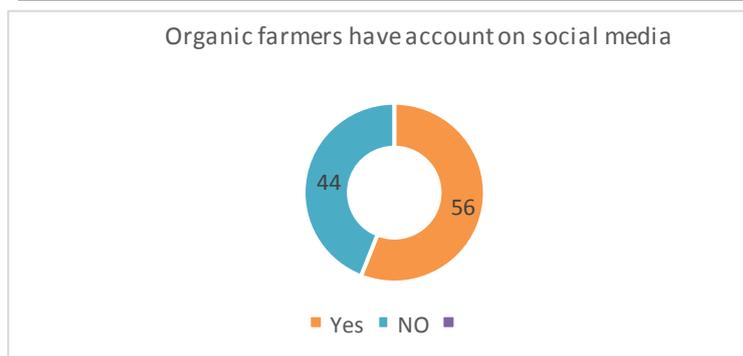
**Table no. 3 Education wise social media Users**



The data shows that most of the organic farmer were non matric i.e., 44 % followed by Matric i.e. 30 %. While interviewing with farmers it is found that farmers are able to operate mobile phones and social media on it.

**Table no 4. Organic farmers have account on social media**

Yes	28	56 %
No	22	44 %

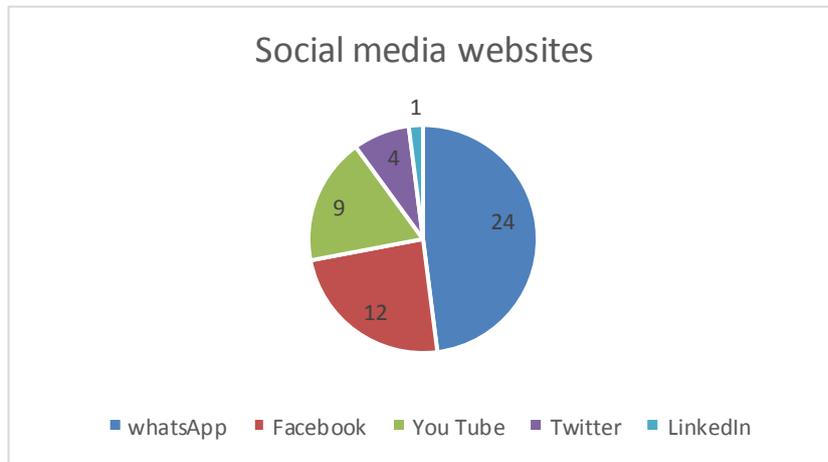


The data shows that most of the organic farmer have account on social media websites .

**Table no. 5 Social Media websites**

Parameter	Frequency	Rank
WhatsApp	24	1

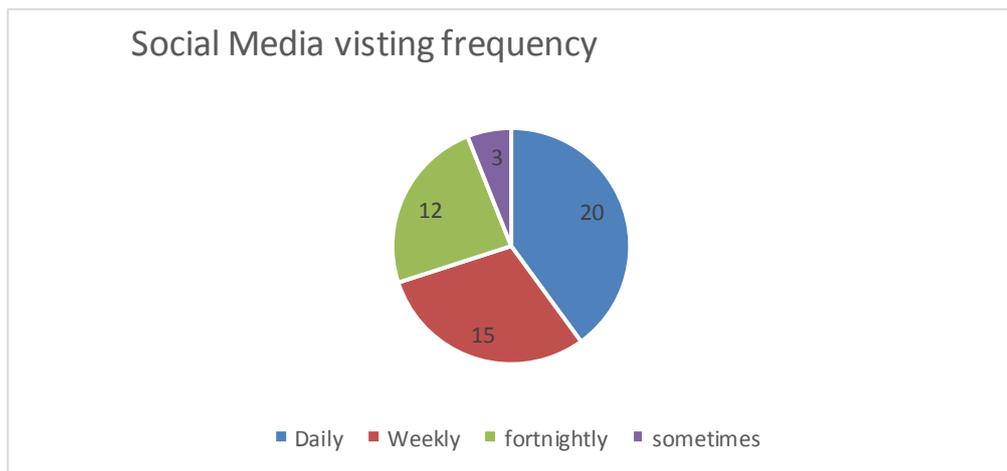
Facebook	12	2
YouTube	9	3
Twitter	4	4
LinkedIn	1	5



The data shows that most of the organic farmers are having account on social media. Most of them are using WhatsApp followed by Facebook and YouTube.

**Table no. 6 Frequently of visiting social media**

Parameters	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	20	40
Weekly	15	30
Fortnightly	12	24
Sometimes	3	6



The data shows that most of the organic farmers are visiting social media daily i.e., 40%.

**Table no. 7 Use of social media in Organic Farming product marketing for**

Parameters	Frequency	Rank
Information Purpose	32	1
Selling and buying of organic product	18	3
Sharing Information	15	4
Solution of Problem	30	2
Branding	11	5

The data shows that most of the respondents are using social media for information purpose followed by Solution of problem. From the interview of the organic farmers, it is found that farmers are seeking information on YouTube videos, because they directly visualize the thing practically.

**Table no. 8 How likely are you to view pictures / videos that are posted on social media?**

Very strongly Like	Like	Neutral	Unlikely	Very strongly Unlike
12	21	7	12	4

The data shows that most of the organic farmers are likely for to view pictures / videos that are posted on social media.

**Table no. 9 Problems in using social media in agricultural marketing**

Parameters	Frequency	Rank
Adoption of social media as a tool of organic marketing.	25	4
There is a limited access to social media because of data, network etc	42	1
No training and education about use of social media in organic farming marketing	32	2
People are less trusted on e-buying, e-selling of agricultural commodity on social media	30	3

### Findings

Most of the organic farming producer in India are having their official pages, blogs, and groups on social media. It is having prompt response for the question. It saves time and cost of the farmers. Farmers getting right information on right time. For example, weather report. Network providing companies are giving more data in lesser prices. It helps farmers to browse more. Young farmers believe more on use of social media in agricultural marketing. They seek more information on YouTube and Facebook. WhatsApp is the most likely app among farmers

**Conclusion :** In 21<sup>st</sup> era a new cultural movement has totally changed and shifted to more demand for healthier food choices like organic food. Organic

industry is the fastest growing food sector in India which Produces 30 per cent of the total organic product in the world. As social media has developed, subcultures have taken off with food innovation a primary beneficiary. Social media interaction allows organic farmers to post positive or negative opinions . Because organic farming is more sustainable than conventional farming, as it is environmentally friendly, has better yields, reduces soil erosion, and provides more nutritious food because it is less contaminated with chemicals and pesticides and which is today's need of the society . Most of the organic farmers are using mobile phones nowadays with internet and social media applications in it. Farmers are making use of social media for innovative practices, sharing information etc. the most popular social media in organic farming product marketing is Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Twitter and LinkedIn. Most of them login to social sites daily. Various problems in use of social media in agricultural marketing is studied. These social media outlets also provide a platform for those who do not approve of modern organic farming practices to produce economically profitable, environment friendly, and socially beneficial organic products. So, the role of social media marketing becoming more important in organic farming product in today's era.

### **Suggestions**

Even though entire study has been proved more importance and having more scope for social media marketing in organic farming products but still some of organic farmers faces some challenges and problems due to lack of training , network problem , no proper support from the Government etc. So, to develop more in business, organic farmers have to spend more on social media and marketing to make more customers knowledgeable for organic products. For better Promotions and advertising regarding organic product as to make a common term in the market for users and distributors as well as to educate regarding organic products, and its impact on environment and customers health social media is the best tool in the present era.

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