The Role of social media In Promoting Sustainable Agriculture Practices

Norina Jabeen[1*] and Jaweria Gul[2]

[1]*Department of Rural Sociology, University of Agriculture Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan*
[2]*Department of Biotechnology, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University, Sheringal, Dir, Pakistan*

ARTICLE INFO			ABSTRACT

ABSTRACT

Background: The emergence of social media as a potent technology that has revolutionized networking, communication, and information sharing.

Objectives: This study examined the role of social media in promoting sustainable agriculture practices.

Methods: A comprehensive list of popular social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, was utilized for data collection. A systematic content analysis approach was employed to categorize and analyze 208 posts, articles, videos, and other media related to sustainable agriculture. The data were collected through keyword searches, hashtags, and participation in farming communities and groups.

Results: Quantitative and qualitative methods were used to analyze the data, including engagement metrics such as 420 likes, 388 shares, 76 comments, and reach of approximately 13,200 impressions on Facebook. Organic farming emerged as the most frequently discussed theme with a frequency of 76. The study found significant variations in consumer perceptions across social media platforms, with 183 positive mentions, 47 neutral mentions, and 78 negative mentions related to sustainable agriculture on Facebook.

Conclusion: Overall, the findings highlighted the significant role of social media platforms, such as Facebook, in promoting sustainable agriculture practices and shaping consumer perceptions.

Corresponding Author's Email: norinajabeen@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, social media has emerged as a powerful tool that has revolutionized communication, connectivity, and information dissemination [1]. It has transformed the way we interact with one another and has permeated almost every aspect of our lives. One area where social media has had a profound impact is in promoting sustainable agriculture practices [2-3]. Sustainable agriculture, which aims to meet the present needs of food production while preserving the environment and ensuring the well-being of future generations, has become a pressing concern in the face of climate change and dwindling natural resources [4].

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube have become virtual hubs for sharing information, raising awareness, and fostering collaboration among individuals, communities, and organizations passionate about sustainable agriculture [5-6]. These platforms have the ability to connect farmers, researchers, policymakers, and consumers from all corners of the globe, facilitating the exchange of ideas, best practices, and success stories [6].

One of the primary ways social media promotes sustainable agriculture practices is by providing a platform for knowledge dissemination. Farmers can access a wealth of information on innovative techniques, crop rotation, organic farming, precision agriculture, and sustainable irrigation methods [7-8]. Social media allows them to connect with experts, join farming communities, participate in webinars, and engage in discussions that help them make informed decisions and adopt sustainable practices that are better for the environment and their long-term economic viability [9].

Furthermore, social media has proven to be a powerful advocacy tool in the realm of sustainable agriculture. Activists, non-profit organizations, and environmentalists can leverage these platforms to raise awareness about the importance of sustainable farming practices and the detrimental effects of conventional methods [10]. Through compelling stories, impactful visuals, and thought-provoking campaigns, social media can generate public interest, support, and even policy changes that prioritize sustainable agriculture [2].

Social media's influence extends beyond just farmers and activists; it plays a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior as well. Consumers are increasingly demanding ethically produced, environmentally friendly, and locally sourced food. Social media platforms empower consumers to learn about sustainable agriculture practices, connect with farmers and producers who adopt these practices, and make more informed choices about the food they consume [11]. The sharing of recipes, sustainable cooking tips, and experiences through social media helps create a community of conscious consumers who prioritize sustainable agriculture [6].

Social media has thus emerged as a powerful force in promoting sustainable agriculture practices. Through knowledge dissemination, advocacy, and consumer awareness, social media platforms enable a global network of individuals and organizations to collaborate, learn from each other, and drive positive change in the agriculture sector. The role of social media in promoting sustainable agriculture is increasingly significant, and its potential to create a more sustainable future for food production is immense [12].

The study explored and analyzed the role of social media in promoting sustainable agriculture practices. The study aimed to investigate the impact of social media platforms on knowledge dissemination, advocacy, and consumer behavior related to sustainable agriculture

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Data Collection

a. **Social Media Platforms:** A comprehensive list of popular social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, was identified as primary sources for data collection.

b. **Content Analysis:** A systematic content analysis approach was employed to analyze the social media content related to sustainable agriculture practices. This involved collecting and categorizing posts, articles, videos, and other relevant media shared on the selected platforms.

c. **Sampling:** A purposive sampling technique was used to select relevant content based on specific keywords and hashtags related to sustainable agriculture. The sampling process ensured a diverse range of geographical locations, farming practices, and target audiences.

Data Collection Procedures

a. Identification and Extraction: Relevant posts and media content were identified through keyword searches, hashtags, and participation in farming communities and groups on social media platforms. Data extraction tools were used to gather the identified content.

b. Data Categorization: The collected data were categorized based on themes, including sustainable farming techniques, organic agriculture, conservation practices, policy discussions, success stories, and consumer engagement.

c. Data Analysis: The categorized data were analyzed using qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative analysis involved identifying key themes, common patterns, and emerging trends in the content. Quantitative analysis included examining engagement metrics such as likes, shares, comments, and reach. The data was analyzed using ANOVA test at SPSS software 24.0 version.

Ethical Considerations

a. Data Privacy and Anonymity: All collected data were handled in accordance with privacy regulations and ethical guidelines. Personal information and identifying details of social media users were anonymized and kept confidential during the analysis.

b. Permission and Consent: Prior consent was obtained from social media users whose content was included in the study. Permissions were sought for the use of copyrighted materials, and appropriate attribution was provided.

RESULTS

The types of sustainable agriculture content that were found on various social media platforms, included Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. The number of posts, tweets, images, and videos related to sustainable agriculture were recorded for each platform. Facebook had the highest number of sustainable agriculture posts with 98 ($p<0.05$). In total, the study identified 208 instances of sustainable agriculture content across all the platforms that were analyzed. These findings suggested that social media, particularly Facebook, played a significant role in promoting sustainable agriculture practices (Table 1).

The engagement metrics for sustainable agriculture content on various social media platforms, included Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. The metrics measured included the number of likes, shares, comments, and reach (impressions) received by the sustainable agriculture content on each platform. On Facebook, the sustainable agriculture content garnered 420 likes, 388 shares, 76 comments, and reached approximately 13,200 impressions. These numbers indicated a significant level of engagement with the content on this platform ($p<0.05$). Similarly, on Twitter, the sustainable agriculture content received 190 likes, 75 shares, 97 comments, and reached approximately 789 impressions. These

engagement metrics also showed a significant level of user interaction ($p < 0.05$). Instagram exhibited high engagement as well, with the sustainable agriculture content receiving 530 likes, 45 shares, 45 comments, and reaching approximately 1,202 impressions. The low p-value of 0.00001 emphasized the significant level of user engagement on this platform. YouTube, although different in nature as a video-sharing platform, also showed notable engagement with sustainable agriculture content. The content received 330 likes, 165 shares, 13 comments, and reached approximately 6,200 impressions. There was a significant level of user interaction on YouTube ($p < 0.05$). Overall, the engagement metrics demonstrated that sustainable agriculture content generated substantial interest and participation across all the analyzed social media platforms. The significant differences in engagement metrics among the platforms suggested that each platform had its own unique audience and user behavior when it came to engaging with sustainable agriculture content (Table 2).

An insight into the most common sustainable agriculture themes found on social media platforms. Among the listed themes, organic farming emerged as the most frequently discussed topic with a frequency of 76. This indicates a significant presence of content related to organic farming on social media platforms ($p < 0.05$). Nonetheless, the prominence of organic farming as a prevalent theme underscored its popularity and importance within the sustainable agriculture discourse on social media (Table 3). Insights into the consumer perception of sustainable agriculture on different social media platforms were recorded. The table presented the number of positive, neutral, and negative mentions related to sustainable agriculture on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. On Facebook, sustainable agriculture received 183 positive mentions, 47 neutral mentions, and 78 negative mentions ($p < 0.05$). Twitter showed 103 positive mentions, 23 neutral mentions, and 56 negative mentions related to sustainable agriculture ($p < 0.05$). Instagram had 13 positive mentions, 80 neutral mentions, and 17 negative mentions related to sustainable agriculture ($p < 0.05$). On YouTube, sustainable agriculture received 73 positive mentions, 750 neutral mentions, and 20 negative mentions. Low p-value ($p < 0.05$) for neutral mentions indicated a significant difference in neutral consumer perception compared to the other platforms. In summary, the table highlights variations in consumer perception of sustainable agriculture across different social media platforms. Facebook and Twitter demonstrate significant differences in positive, neutral, and negative consumer mentions, while Instagram and YouTube also exhibit significant differences in positive and negative mentions. These findings emphasized the role of social media platforms in shaping consumer perceptions of sustainable agriculture (Table 4).

Table 1: Types of Sustainable Agriculture Content on Social Media Platforms

S. No	Social Media Platform	Sustainable Agriculture Content	p-value
1	Facebook	98 posts	
2	Twitter	30 tweets	**0.00001***
3	Instagram	72 images	
4	YouTube	08 videos	**(Significant)**
	Total	208	

Table 2: Engagement Metrics for Sustainable Agriculture Content

Social Media Platform	Likes	Shares	Comments	Reach (Impressions)
Facebook	420	388	76	13200
Twitter	190	75	97	789
Instagram	530	45	45	1202
YouTube	330	165	13	6200
p-value	**0.00001***	**0.00001***	**0.00001***	**0.00001***

*indicated the significant value at p<0.05

Table 3: Most Common Sustainable Agriculture Themes on Social Media Platforms

S. No	Theme	Frequency	p-value
1	Organic farming	76	
2	Permaculture techniques	25	
3	Conservation practices	54	**0.00001***
4	Sustainable irrigation	40	**(Significant)**
5	Crop rotation	16	
6	Community-supported farming	32	

Table 4: Consumer Perception of Sustainable Agriculture on Social Media

Social Media Platform	Positive Mentions	Neutral Mentions	Negative Mentions
Facebook	183	47	78
Twitter	103	23	56
Instagram	13	80	17
YouTube	73	750	20
p-value	**0.00001***	**0.00001***	**0.00010***

*indicated the significant value at p<0.05

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provided valuable insights into the role of social media in promoting sustainable agriculture practices. The data collection process involved the analysis of content from popular social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. The results revealed the types of sustainable agriculture content that were present on these platforms, as well as the engagement metrics and consumer perceptions associated with them.

Facebook was identified as the platform with the highest number of sustainable agriculture posts, indicating its significant role in promoting sustainable farming practices. The engagement metrics, including likes, shares, comments, and reach, demonstrated substantial user interaction with sustainable agriculture content on all platforms. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube each displayed significant levels of engagement, highlighting the effectiveness of social media in generating interest and participation in sustainable agriculture topics [2, 13].

Furthermore, the analysis of common sustainable agriculture themes indicated that organic farming emerged as the most frequently discussed topic across social media platforms. This suggested a strong emphasis on organic farming practices within the sustainable agriculture discourse on social media. The popularity of organic farming aligned with the increasing global trend towards environmentally friendly and health-conscious agricultural practices [14].

The study also examined consumer perceptions of sustainable agriculture on social media. The results revealed variations in positive, neutral, and negative mentions across different platforms. Facebook and Twitter demonstrated significant differences in consumer mentions across all three categories, while Instagram and YouTube showed significant differences in positive and negative mentions. These findings emphasized the influence of social media platforms in shaping consumer perceptions of sustainable agriculture [15].

The significant presence of sustainable agriculture content, high engagement metrics, and variations in consumer perceptions on social media platforms highlighted the potential of these platforms in promoting sustainable agriculture practices. Social media provided a platform for farmers, organizations, policymakers, and consumers to share information, engage in discussions, and raise awareness about sustainable farming techniques, conservation practices, and policy discussions. It enabled the dissemination of success stories, consumer engagement, and the exchange of knowledge and experiences among a diverse range of users [16].

However, it is important to acknowledge that social media platforms also had limitations and challenges. The study considered ethical considerations by handling data privacy and anonymity in accordance with regulations and obtaining consent from users whose content was included. Nonetheless, the potential for misinformation, biased content, and the need for fact-checking should be considered when interpreting information on social media [17].

This study highlighted the significant role that social media played in promoting sustainable agriculture practices. The findings underscored the importance of platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube in disseminating sustainable agriculture content, engaging users, and shaping consumer perceptions. Understanding and harnessing the power of social media could contribute to the advancement of sustainable agriculture by facilitating knowledge sharing, promoting best practices, and fostering a community of stakeholders

dedicated to sustainable farming [18].

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrated the significant role of social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, in promoting sustainable agriculture practices. The analysis of the data revealed a substantial presence of sustainable agriculture content on these platforms, with high levels of user engagement and variations in consumer perceptions. Organic farming emerged as the most frequently discussed theme, highlighting its popularity within the sustainable agriculture discourse on social media. The study emphasized the potential of social media in disseminating information, fostering discussions, and shaping consumer perceptions related to sustainable agriculture. Understanding and leveraging the power of social media can contribute to the advancement of sustainable farming practices by facilitating knowledge sharing, raising awareness, and fostering a community of stakeholders committed to sustainable agriculture.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

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