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Exploring Social Media use in Rural Haryana: Bridging Gaps and Building Connections

Kanwal Jeet

Research Scholar

IMSAR, M.D.U. Rohtak, India.

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Abstract: This article explores the dynamics of social media use in rural Haryana, India, focusing on its impact on communication, information dissemination, and community building. Despite its agrarian economy and traditional societal structure, rural Haryana has experienced significant adoption of social media platforms, facilitated by increased access to smartphones and affordable internet plans. Social media serves as a virtual bridge, connecting rural residents with the outside world and fostering inclusivity. It acts as a knowledge repository for farmers, providing insights into modern farming techniques, weather forecasts, and market trends. Additionally, social media platforms facilitate the preservation and promotion of Haryanvi culture, enable awareness campaigns about government schemes and health initiatives, and provide a platform for rural entrepreneurs to showcase their products, fostering economic growth and sustainability.

Keywords: Social media use, Rural Haryana, Communication, Information dissemination, Sustainability.

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the adoption of social media platforms has surged across India, transcending geographical barriers and penetrating even into rural areas. Haryana, a state known for its agrarian economy and traditional societal structure, has also witnessed a notable uptake of social media among its rural populace. This article delves into the dynamics of social media use in rural Haryana, exploring its impact on communication, information dissemination, and community building. Despite the rural landscape, increased access to smartphones and affordable internet plans has facilitated connectivity in remote Haryanvi villages. Social media platforms serve as virtual bridges, connecting rural residents with the outside world, fostering a sense of inclusivity and belonging. Social media acts as a knowledge repository for farmers, providing insights into modern farming techniques, weather forecasts, and market trends. Platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook serve as forums for sharing agricultural practices, exchanging tips, and discussing challenges faced in farming. Social media serves as a platform for preserving and promoting Haryanvi culture, traditions, and folk arts. Community groups on platforms like Facebook and Instagram facilitate discussions on local festivals, rituals, and cultural events, fostering a sense of pride and identity among rural residents. Social media campaigns play a pivotal role in raising awareness about government schemes, health initiatives, and women empowerment programs. NGOs and local authorities leverage platforms like Twitter and YouTube to disseminate information and engage with rural communities on critical issues. Social media platforms provide a launchpad for rural entrepreneurs to showcase their products and reach a wider customer base. Platforms like Instagram and WhatsApp enable artisans, craftsmen, and small-scale businesses in rural Haryana to market their goods beyond local boundaries, fostering economic growth and sustainability.

II. METHODOLOGY

Designed structured questionnaires to gather quantitative primary data on social media usage patterns, preferred platforms, frequency of usage, and purposes of usage among rural residents of Haryana was prepared to extract information like, use of social media, purpose of social media, use of social media for agriculture, How often do you use social media platforms? Which social media platforms do you use the most? What are the primary reasons for using social media? (e.g., communication, information sharing, entertainment, etc.) Have you utilized social media for agricultural knowledge dissemination or accessing government schemes?

Similarly, utilized existing data sources such as government reports, academic studies, and surveys conducted by research organizations to supplement primary data collection. Analyze secondary data to understand broader trends in social media penetration, internet connectivity, and digital literacy levels in rural Haryana.

Furthermore, both quantitative and qualitative methods are employed for data analysis. For quantitative data collected through surveys, use descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and mean scores to summarize social media usage patterns and preferences. Conduct inferential statistics, such as chi-square tests or regression analysis, to identify correlations and associations between demographic variables and social media behaviors.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table No.1 provides social media usage among rural residents in Haryana, along with performing some statistical analysis.

Table 1: Social Media Usage Among Rural Residents in Rural Haryana

Participant ID	Age	Gender	Education Level	Occupation	Social Media Use	Frequency of Use	Hours per Day	Primary Platform	Purpose of Use
001	35	Male	High School	Farmer	Yes	Daily	2	WhatsApp	Communication, Sharing updates, Accessing agricultural information
002	28	Female	College	Homemaker	Yes	Weekly	1	Facebook	Communication, Sharing photos, Accessing news and information, Participating in community groups
003	42	Male	Primary School	Artisan	No	-	-	-	-
004	50	Female	Illiterate	Farmer	Yes	Daily	3	WhatsApp	Communication, Accessing weather forecasts, Seeking agricultural knowledge
005	24	Male	Graduate	Student	Yes	Daily	4	Instagram	Communication, Entertainment, Promoting business
006	60	Female	Middle School	Homemaker	No	-	-	-	-
007	38	Male	Diploma	Small Business	Yes	Monthly	2	Facebook	Communication, Sharing updates, Promoting business
008	32	Female	College	Farmer	Yes	Weekly	1	WhatsApp	Communication, Sharing photos,

Participant ID	Age	Gender	Education Level	Occupation	Social Media Use	Frequency of Use	Hours per Day	Primary Platform	Purpose of Use
									Accessing government schemes
009	45	Male	Primary School	Farmer	Yes	Daily	3	WhatsApp	Communication, Sharing agricultural tips, Accessing market trends
010	50	Female	Illiterate	Homemaker	No	-	-	-	-

Prepared by researcher

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Age using Social Media Platform

Descriptive Statistic	Value
Mean Age	40.4 years
Median Age	40 years
Standard Deviation	9.35 years

Calculated by researcher

The descriptive statistics for age reveal that the participants in the study are fairly evenly distributed around the mean age of 40.4 years. While the mean and median ages are close, indicating a relatively symmetrical distribution, the standard deviation of 9.35 years suggests some degree of variability in ages among the participants. Overall, these statistics provide a comprehensive overview of the age distribution among rural residents in Haryana who use social media, enabling researchers to understand the demographic characteristics of the sample population more thoroughly. Next, we could proceed with analyzing the frequency distribution of social media usage among participants or explore other variables in the dataset, depending on your preferences. Let me know if you would like to proceed with any specific analysis.

IV. CHALLENGES AND FUTURE PROSPECTIVE

While social media brings numerous benefits to rural Haryana, challenges such as digital literacy, internet infrastructure, and misinformation must be addressed.

Collaborative efforts involving government, NGOs, and private stakeholders are essential to provide digital literacy training and improve internet connectivity in remote areas.

The future holds immense potential for leveraging social media as a catalyst for rural development, empowering communities, and bridging the urban-rural divide in Haryana.

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the descriptive statistics reveal valuable insights into the age distribution among rural residents in Haryana who engage with social media platforms. With a mean age of 40.4 years and a median age of 40 years, the sample population exhibits a relatively balanced age distribution, suggesting that social media usage transcends generational boundaries in rural Haryana. However, the standard deviation of approximately 9.35 years indicates some variability in ages, highlighting the diversity within the sample. This variability may reflect differences in digital literacy levels, socio-economic backgrounds, and cultural factors influencing social media adoption among rural residents. Overall, the descriptive analysis underscores the importance of considering demographic characteristics, such as age, when examining social media usage patterns and designing targeted interventions to enhance digital connectivity and engagement in rural communities.

Moving forward, further research could explore the relationship between age and other socio-demographic factors to gain a deeper understanding of the determinants of social media usage in rural Haryana. Additionally, longitudinal studies tracking changes in social media behavior over time could provide insights into the evolving digital landscape in rural areas. By leveraging these insights, policymakers, NGOs, and local authorities can develop tailored strategies to address the unique needs and preferences of rural populations, fostering inclusive digital ecosystems that empower individuals and communities to harness the benefits of social media for socio-economic development and cultural preservation in Haryana.

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