



Use of Social Media for Marketing of Agricultural Commodities in Selected Markets in Ibadan metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the use of social media for marketing agricultural commodities in Nigeria particularly in Ibadan metropolis. Descriptive survey design was used to carry out the study, while 100 questionnaires were used to obtain data from the market traders of Agricultural products in Ibadan. Data was analyzed using descriptive (mean, frequency, standard deviation, percentages) statistics. The result shows that majority of the respondents were female (61%), married (36%) and within the age range of 30-35 years. The findings also revealed that Instagram, Facebook and Youtube are the most used social media App among the respondents and almost all the respondents (96%) spend more than 1 hour daily on social media for advertising their products. The study further revealed that Facebook and Instagram were the most preferred social media tools for product marketing by the respondents. The study therefore shows that social media was used to a very high extent to enhance customer relationship and increase sales due to its mode of operation in marketing agricultural commodities. It's recommended that agricultural commodities sellers should learn more on how to effectively use social media for agricultural commodity marketing.

Keywords: *Social Media Platform, Usage, Agricultural Commodities, Marketing, Traders*

Introduction

The role performed by the agricultural sector in the development of the global economy cannot be over emphasized. Agricultural sector performance, particularly through higher productivity, is one of the principal ways of reducing poverty in developing countries, according to a report by Singh *et al.* (2019) which is consistent with any economy's key macroeconomic goals and two of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals: "No Hunger" and "No Poverty" are two phrases that come to mind (Singh *et al.*, 2019). Until recently, majority of agricultural information was passed down from farmer to farmer via word of mouth (Gonte, 2018). Radio, mail, and face-to-face communication were mainly the three means of information for agriculturalists in the nineteenth century. Large corporations and governments have been known to promote their products through advertisements in print and electronic media, in addition to the product-price-storage-distribution approach.

Agricultural information sharing was dominated by traditional media such as newspapers, television, and magazines until the mid-nineteenth century (Raj and Bhattacharjee, 2017). The purpose of such commercials

is to raise knowledge about the items' availability, where they can be found, and the predicted benefits of utilizing them, especially if the products can be swapped for other products. Although these means of communication remain vital, the Internet has had a greater impact on Nigerian agriculture than any other communication channel in the last century, with its two main influences being how agriculturalists obtain information and their ability to engage with consumers (FAO, 2017). Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, and other social media platforms are becoming more popular for exchanging information on agricultural products and agricultural marketing. In today's world, the use of social media in agriculture marketing is fast growing (Kipkurgat *et al.*, 2016). Farmers are being provided with enhanced services by a number of service providers. Users can communicate directly with customers, service providers, information sharing centers, and other users via social media. Farmers are utilizing social media to boost their output at every stage (Kipkurgat *et al.*, 2016).

The need for a more efficient strategy has been long overdue, given the weaknesses of print and electronic media in marketing agricultural products. In Nigeria and

other emerging nations, the fast expansion of mobile phone use over the previous two decades has created a viable marketing alternative for agricultural products (Khou and Suresh, 2018). Mobile phones have made a big contribution to people's empowerment in developing countries by expanding information networking coverage to remote locations. As a result, many rural communities are benefiting greatly from its application in numerous fields. This has resulted in an improvement in the living conditions of poor farmers in industrialized countries, prompting the researcher to investigate the use of social media for agricultural commodity marketing in developing countries such as Nigeria.

Methodology

The study was carried out in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State, South-West, Nigeria. Ibadan metropolis consists of Ibadan South West, Ibadan South East, Ibadan North East and Ibadan North West. Therefore, the target population for this study is the market traders of Agricultural products in these zones of Ibadan.

A stratified random sampling technique was used for this study. Bodija, Sango-Ojurin and Oje markets traders who engage in agricultural products in Ibadan formed the sampling units in the design. First, a list of all the agricultural products traders in Bodija, Sango-Ojurin and Oje markets, Ibadan were obtained from the office of the markets queen (*Iya Oloja*); they were put into a composite group according to the agricultural products they sell. This was made up of five groups of grain traders, vegetable and fruit traders, tuber traders, fish and meat sellers, and cooking oil sellers. The traders according to each group were compiled serially on a piece of paper, through proportional sampling as per list provided, the traders were then randomly selected from each market with a number of participants to proportionally represent the groups in each market.

Results and Discussion

Distribution of the Respondents by Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Table 1 show the percentage distribution of respondents according to their socio-economic characteristics. It is observed from the table that majority of the respondents were female and within the age range of 30-35 years. This implies that many of the respondents were youths and in their active age who engages in agricultural products marketing through the use of social media platform. This finding is in line with that of Bite and Anand (2017) who found that people who engaged in their study were aged 30-40 years and were active to engage in social media for marketing. Majority of the respondents were married, the implication of this is that many of the respondents might be assisted by their spouses in the process of engaging consumers in marketing of agricultural commodities through social media. This finding is consistent with that of Thakur and Chander (2018) in their study on the use of Social Media in Agricultural Extension. Results also revealed that majority of the respondents earned between N51,000-N75,000 monthly, this indicates that respondents were

capable of buying smart phones with their income if they so willed and browse the internet through the social media to aid the marketing of agricultural commodities. This is in line with the study of Pan *et al.* (2020) who found that respondents with stable monthly income will have the capacity to buy phones, data and accessories to browse the internet to market agricultural commodities. The results further showed that 20% of the respondents were self-employed, 16% civil servants and 8% as private company, while 56% were into agribusiness. This is an indication that the study is centered on agricultural commodities sellers in selected markets in Ibadan.

Use of social media in the marketing of agricultural commodities

Table 2 shows the use of social media in the marketing of agricultural commodities. It was observed that the marketers were able to download and upload files relating to marketing of agricultural commodities with the help of social media as it enables multiple users to take advantage of a singular platform. Sometimes they made use of blogs and websites to interact, and empower the consumers. This finding is similar to that of Singh *et al.* (2019) who carried out study on the role of social media in agriculture marketing and concluded that many agricultural commodities marketers have their official pages, blogs, and groups on social media and it helps in getting information and solving the problems. It was deduced from the table that social media has increased the marketers' sales due to its mode of operation in marketing agricultural products.

Benefits derived from the use of social media for the marketing of agricultural commodities

Table 3 shows the benefits derived from the use of social media for the marketing of agricultural commodities. It revealed that social media served as brand monitoring tools to the marketers because they were able to see what the customers are saying about their product. Social media has also highly benefited the marketers as they were able to ask consumers to share their feedback or testimony on the benefit derived from consuming their product and this automatically convince more users to patronize them. The results from the table show that the use of social media for marketing agricultural commodities is of high benefit to the respondents and this will encourage further use of this medium in marketing their products.

Types of social media use for the marketing of agricultural commodities

Table 4 shows the types of social media use for the marketing of agricultural commodities. Instagram was the most commonly used social media platform among the marketers, followed by LinkedIn, YouTube, snapchat, Facebook, Tiktok, Twitter, WhatsApp, reddit and Pinterest. This indicates that the agricultural commodities marketers use the entire social media platform to market their products. This is similar to the findings of Kiran (2018) who observed the application of social media in advertising fresh fruit and vegetable

products in Ahmednagar district and found that Internet based communication tools such as Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, Instagram, LinkedIn, Pinterest, YouTube etc known collectively as Social Media are used by large and small business alike, including agricultural marketing for fresh fruit and vegetables. This is similar to the findings of Wangu (2014) who showed the use of social media as a source of agricultural information by small holder farmers and found that agricultural information is highly required among a majority of farmers in the study area.

Frequency of use of social media for marketing

Table 5 shows the frequency of use social media. It is observed that almost all the respondents (96%) used more than 1 hour on social media to operate, display their farm output and advertise their farm products. It is also observed that within this hour they were mostly on Facebook to collaborate with buyers in the most personalized and result driven manner to get the expected result.

Preferred social media by the respondents for the marketing of agricultural commodities

Table 6 shows that Facebook is the most preferred social media platform, followed by the Instagram, Twitter, Tiktok, Pinterest, Youtube and linkedin, while snapchat is the least preferred. The choice of Facebook might be due to convenience of use and the most popular among the marketers. The marketers are rational enough that they might not want to spend much on buying data. However, Facebook can still be used to communicate with the customers without data; however videos and pictures cannot be viewed as programmed by network providers in Nigeria. These findings corroborate with that of Singh *et al.* (2019) that carried out study on role of social media in agriculture marketing. They found out that Face book is the most likely social media for pages and profiles, while YouTube videos are most popular for information getting with applications.

Extent of Use of Social Media as a Marketing Tool Measure

Table 7 shows the extent of use of social media as a marketing tool measure. It can be observed that modern technology is used to a very high extent for marketing agricultural products because it enhances customer relationship. This is in line with the findings of Josh *et al.* (2017) who noted that social media can offer amazing opportunities to farmers. It was also deduced from the table that marketing agricultural products through the social media platforms is essential to high extent for the growth of farm productivity. The results also shows that marketing agricultural products through social media platforms helps bridge the gap of non-availability of farm output in some areas. It was further revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that blogs and websites are used to a very high extent in creating articles on marketing of agricultural commodities.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was revealed that

modern technology was used to a very high extent for marketing agricultural products because it enhances customer relationship. It was deduced from the study that social media has increased the marketers' sales due to its mode of operation in marketing agricultural products. Social media has also highly benefited the marketers as they were able to ask consumers to share their feedback or testimony on the benefit derived from consuming their product and this automatically convince more users to patronize them. It is believed that social media has not been fully utilized with its full potential for marketing agricultural commodities. In line with the findings of this study, it is therefore recommended that in as much as social media has been used to expand sales networking in different sectors, agricultural commodity sellers should learn more on how to effectively use social media for agricultural commodities marketing. This will enable them utilize the full potentials of the platform for marketing agricultural commodities. In spite of the benefits derived by the marketers to advertise the agricultural products, it is recommended that they should continue using the platform to reach both the existing and potential customers. Agricultural product sellers should further educate themselves on the use of social media to enable them acquire knowledge to generate innovative ideas and creativity for production and marketing of their farm product.

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Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Variables	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean
Gender	Male	39	39.0	
	Female	61	61.0	
	Total	100	100.0	
Age	Below 17 years	10	10.0	28.5±18years
	18-25 years	10	10.0	
	26-30 years	6	6.0	
	30-35 years	48	48.0	
	Above 35 years	26	26.0	
	Total	100	100.0	
Religion	Islam	42	42.0	
	Christianity	53	53.0	
	Others	5	5.0	
	Total	100	100.0	
Marital status	Single	24	24.0	
	Married	36	36.0	
	Divorced	12	12.0	
	Separated	28	28.0	
	Total	100	100.0	
Ethnic group	Yoruba	47	47.0	
	Igbo	28	28.0	
	Hausa	10	10.0	
	Others	15	15.0	
	Total	100	100.0	
Monthly Income	N1,000-25,000	12	12.0	
	N26,000-50,000	17	17.0	
	N51,000-75,000	40	40.0	
	N76,000-N100,000	18	18.0	
	Above N100,000	18	18.0	
	Total	100	100.0	
Occupation	Self-employed	20	20.0	
	Civil Servant	16	16.0	
	Private company	8	8.0	
	Agribusiness	56	56.0	
	Total	100	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 2: Use of social media in the marketing of agricultural commodities

S/N	Items	Yes	No
1.	I understand how to use social media to advertise my product	76(76.0)	24(24.0)
2.	I connect to more consumer of agricultural products through the use of social media	73(73.0)	27(27.0)
3.	I used social media to display my farm output	70(70.0)	30(30.0)
4.	Social media has increased my sales because it is easy to operate in marketing agricultural products	79(79.0)	21(21.0)
5.	Using social media to market agricultural products gives consumer a rest of mind because they preview what they intend to buy.	66(66.0)	44(44.0)
6.	Blogs and websites are used to provide the ability to create articles and blogs to interact, communicate, inform and empower my consumers.	80(80.0)	20(20.0)
7.	The use of social media further increases the chances of communication between the sellers and buyers with the help of personal details, comments, image, video posts, and a lot more.	61(61.0)	39(39.0)
8.	Social media helps to build strong personal relationships with consumers of agricultural products.	60(60.0)	40(40.0)
9.	Marketing of agricultural commodities is facilitated by communicating with consumers in a productive manner.	76(76.0)	24(24.0)
10.	I am able to download and upload files relating to marketing of agricultural commodities with the help of social media as it enables multiple users to take advantage of a singular platform.	88(88.0)	22(22.0)

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 3: Benefits derived from the use of social media for the marketing of agricultural commodities

S/N	Items	Highly Benefit	Little Benefit	Not a Benefit
1.	Consumers are easily reached through the use of social media for marketing of agricultural products	66(66.0)	32(32.0)	12(12.0)
2.	Placing order is possible through the use of social media for marketing of agricultural products	72(72.0)	24(24.0)	4(4.0)
3.	Using social media to place order has made home delivery of agricultural products possible	60(60.0)	20(20.0)	20(20.0)
4.	Social media has created a fastest way of increasing consumer networking thereby sales increases	80(80.0)	20(20.0)	0(0.0)
5	Since I have been making use of social media to market my agricultural products, my sales revenue has increased	72(72.0)	12(12.0)	16(16.0)
6	Social media makes it easy to collaborate with consumers in the most personalized and result driven manner to get the expected outcomes in a well-synchronized fashion	79(79.0)	20(20.0)	1(1.0)
7	Social media also allows to ask consumers to share their feedback or testimony on the benefit derive from consuming my product and this automatically convince more users to patronize me.	88(88.0)	8(8.0)	4(4.0)
8	Social media is beneficial for brand monitoring tools in order to see what exactly is being talked about my agricultural products	96(96.0)	0(0.0)	4(4.0)
9	Social media are the ultimate help when it comes to summarizing all the feedbacks and comments about my agricultural products	51(51.0)	9(9.0)	40(40.0)
10	Uses of Social Media are immense in empowering me to know what people are talking about my brand, product or service to enable me manage the reputation of my brand on the web.	62(62.0)	38(38.0)	0(0.0)
11	Social media serves as a fastest tool to connect consumers of my agricultural products	84(84.0)	16(16.0)	0(0.0)
12	Customer information and discussions are easily retained with social media	84(84.0)	16(16.0)	0(0.0)
13	Social media create an everlasting connection between me and my customers that patronize my agricultural products	66(66.0)	0(0.0)	34(34.0)
14	Social media is beneficial to my sales of my agricultural product as information about new arrival of my agricultural product is fast in reaching the consumers	77(77.0)	13(13.0)	10(10.0)
15	Pictures and information of my agricultural products are easily updated through social media tools.	58(58.0)	2(2.0)	40(40.0)

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 4: Types of social media use for the marketing of agricultural commodities

S/N	Items	Yes	No
1.	Facebook	68(68.0)	32(32.0)
2.	Twitter	63(63.0)	37(37.0)
3.	WhatsApp	40(40.0)	60(60.0)
4.	Tiktok	64(64.0)	36(36.0)
5.	Youtube	76(76.0)	24(24.0)
6.	Instagram	80(80.0)	20(20.0)
7.	Linkedin	73(73.0)	27(27.0)
8.	Snapchat	70(70.0)	30(30.0)
9.	Reddit	66(66.0)	44(44.0)
10.	Pinterest	66(66.0)	44(44.0)

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 5: Frequency of use of social media for marketing

S/N	Items	More than 1hour	3 – 6 Hours	Less than 1hour
1.	I operate social media to advertise my farmproduct	96(96.0)	0(0.0)	4(4.0)
2.	I connect to more consumer of agricultural products through the use of social media	67(67.0)	0(0.0)	33(33.0)
3.	I used social media to display my farm output because it makes the product to look fresh	80(80.0)	20(20.0)	0(0.0)
4.	My marketing strategy has undergone the testof all social media platforms	88(88.0)	8(8.0)	4(4.0)
5.	I share my contact with customer to add themup in my social media contact for marketing of agricultural products	58(58.0)	2(2.0)	40(40.0)
6.	I collaborate with buyers in the most personalized and result driven manner to get the expected result	60(60.0)	20(20.0)	20(20.0)
7.	I used Blogs and websites to create product pictures and video of agricultural products	73(73.0)	27(27.0)	0(0.0)
8.	I extend my marketing strategy with the helpof social media	62(62.0)	38(38.0)	0(0.0)
9.	Facebook is my favourite social media tool to market my product	84(84.0)	16(16.0)	0(0.0)
10.	I am with my phone to respond to any message from my customers	68(68.0)	32(32.0)	0(0.0)

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 6: Preferred social media by the respondents for the marketing of agricultural commodities

S/N	ITEMS	Yes	No
1.	Facebook	96(96.0)	4(4.0)
2.	Twitter	76(76.0)	24(24.0)
3.	WhatsApp	65(65.0)	35(35.0)
4.	Tiktok	72(72.0)	28(28.0)
5.	Youtube	68(68.0)	32(32.0)
6.	Instagram	80(80.0)	20(20.0)
7.	Linkedin	66(66.0)	44(44.0)
8.	Snapchart	40(40.0)	60(60.0)
9.	Reddit	67(67.0)	33(33.0)
10.	Pinterest	73(73.0)	73(73.0)

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 7: Extent of Usage of Social Media As Marketing Tool Measures

S/N	Items	Very High Extent	High Extent	Low Extent	Very Low Extent
1	Marketing agricultural products can only thrive through Social media platforms	30(30.0)	20(20.0)	27(27.0)	22(22.0)
2	Marketing agricultural products should be done through modern technology	68(68.0)	6(6.0)	22(22.0)	10(4.0)
3	Marketing agricultural products through the social media platform enhanced the customer relationship	68(68.0)	7(7.0)	22(22.0)	4(4.0)
4	Marketing agricultural products through the social media platforms is essential for the growth of farm productivity	18(18.0)	29(29.0)	34(34.0)	22(22.0)
5	Marketing agricultural products through social media platform bridge the gap of non-availability of farm output in some areas.	43(43.0)	22(22.0)	22(22.0)	13(13.0)
6	Blogs and websites are used to provide the ability to create articles and blogs on Marketing agricultural products	63(63.0)	26(26.0)	9(9.0)	3(3.0)
7	The use of social media further increases the chances of creating awareness about Marketing agricultural products.	41(41.0)	13(13.0)	35(35.0)	11(11.0)
8	Social media helps to build strong personal relationships with marketing agricultural products	36(36.0)	22(22.0)	30(30.0)	11(11.0)
9	Marketing of agricultural commodities is facilitated by using social media for marketing	20(20.0)	15(15.0)	29(29.0)	36(36.0)
10	I am able to download and upload files relating to marketing of agricultural commodities with the help of social media	14(14.0)	27(27.0)	36(36.0)	23(23.0)

Source: Field Survey, 2021