

Impact of Social media Influencers and Social Media Content Quality on Farmers Purchase Decision for Agriculture Inputs

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Abstract: This study explores how social media influencers (SMI) and the nature of the social media content (SMCQ) affects farmers' buying decisions (FPD) regarding their farms' agricultural inputs. The design used for the research was quantitative research and the data source was primary data which were obtained using a structured questionnaire to 400 farmers. Overall, descriptive statistics, as well as RA, CFA and SEM were used. The results show that SMI and content quality have impact on the farmers buying decision in the significant way and the effect of SMI's credibility is relatively greater than that of content quality. Caring, reliable and interesting digital information raises farmer's confidence and helps farmers to make good, informed purchasing decisions. The study emphasizes the growing significance of digital marketing in the world of agriculture, offering a series of practical points for agricultural input companies, policy makers, and extension services in order to improve the participation of farmers via proper social media marketing strategies.

Keywords: Social Media Influencers, Social Media Content Quality, Farmers' Purchase Decision, Agricultural Inputs, Digital Marketing.

1. Introduction

Digital technologies have become a vital part of agricultural marketing, with increased growth and access to information for farmers outside of the scope of traditional agricultural extension services and dealer networks. In recent years, the increasing use of smartphones, low-cost Internet, and SM has revolutionised how agricultural knowledge is created and accessed. Scripted information comparison and online videos have become essential tools for farmers to access to find out about new crops, fertilisers, pesticides, farm machinery, irrigation methods and precision farming techniques. In this regard, SM has become a heavy SM marketing communication tool playing an active part in influencing farmers' perceptions and choice of buying the farm product.

Traditionally the farmer relies mainly on farmers' field officers, input providers, other farmers and demonstrations before procuring agricultural inputs. With the emergence of digital transformation, however, so has the information ecosystem as part of which influencers have become commonplace that regularly produce videos of education, product demonstrations, crop management tutorials and field performance reviews. The influencers have usually been experienced in farming, knowledgeable about farming, or widely recognized as credible representatives of the community and can therefore shape the attitude of farmers towards different agricultural products. Influencer created content carries a perceived authenticity, relatedness and experience that is more real than traditional advertising and/or cuts down on uncertainty when buying expensive agricultural inputs.

Another key factor that plays a crucial role in digital marketing is the quality of the content on SM. Quality content is relevant, accurate, credible, informative, timely, visually interesting, clear and engaging. Farmers are looking for agricultural market topics that give useful demonstrations, proof, field trial outcomes, comparisons, and



true-to-life success stories, as their buying choices have direct impacts on the productivity and profitability of their farms. Use of informative and credible digital information further helps to increase farmer confidence, decrease perceived risk, and encourage informed purchasing decisions. The digital versions, on the other hand, if not presented with evidence or promotional, could lower trust as well as make them less likely to adopt the product. Thus, the quality of information is an important factor that can shape its interaction with farmers and affect the intention to purchase among farmers.

SMI serve as opinion leaders that act as a link between agricultural companies and the agricultural community. The influence they display is generally understood as being related to 'Source Credibility Theory' which highlights expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness as must have elements which determine the effectiveness of persuasive communication. Generally farmers have a more trust in recommendations made by experienced people compared to traditional promotional advertisements, which are based on common sense and actual experience in the field. This interpersonal trust has many implications for the uptake of agricultural innovations, or for consuming branded farm inputs.

Multiple brands are available with similar products that supply the farmers like seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, bio-fertilizers, micronutrients and farm equipment that have contributed to the increased competitiveness of the agricultural input industry. Businesses are therefore competing with one another on pushing hard to launch Digital Marketing Plans to create ahead of the curve with SMI, live demos, webinars and education to help them stay ahead of the curve and improve customer relationships. The dynamic of influencers communicating with one another and with the farmer presents a great opportunity for peer-to-peer communication that includes learning, leading to comments, discussions and shared experiences among farmers.

While this figure growing significance of establishing a professional sourcing approach to consumers through people who influence them is established, studies that test this idea in agricultural input purchases are still in their infancy, especially within developing nations like India. Research has been done about brand awareness, traditional advertising methods, dealers' influence or extension services, but only little research has been undertaken concerning the overall influence of SMI and content quality on farmers' buying. Research about the influence of SMI and content quality on farmers' buying have been comparatively little researched, albeit studies focus on brand awareness, traditional advertising methods or extension influence. Considering the increasing penetration of digital offerings into rural India and the government's focus on Digital Agriculture, grasping these new determinants has become not just relevant for academia but also for management.

This study, therefore, examines how SMI affect farmers' purchasing decisions of agricultural inputs and also how the agricultural information from the SM influences are quality. It focuses specifically on the factors which shape the perceived credibility, expertise, authenticity and engagement of influencers, in addition to content relevance, informativeness, accuracy and visual quality, and how these positively or negatively impact farmers' purchasing decisions. The results are expected to be helpful for agricultural marketing literature as it combines both the perspectives of 'influencer marketing' and 'content quality' at the same time that considers the influence of both on a farmer's purchasing behaviour. In addition, the study will give inputs to the managers of agricultural input producers, digital marketers, policy makers, extension services, and agritech companies hence create an effective digital communication strategy for the adoption of awareness creation of informed purchases of agricultural inputs and sustainable agricultural development.

2. Literature Review

The focus of research on agricultural purchase behavior has evolved over a period of time from traditional modes of communication to digital ones. Philip Kotler and Keller (2016) have noted that digital interaction, electronic word-of-mouth and online communities have started to play a greater role in consumer buying behaviour. Through their work they have laid the foundation for understanding how digital communication impacts on information search, product evaluation, and purchase behavior, thereby establishing a theoretical base for understanding farmers' purchase behaviour digitally.

Shradha Suman (2021) explored whether the agro-input brands affect farmers' purchasing decisions at Bihar. Results showed that when farmers receive proper information and had good market reputation, the brand images significantly influenced the choice of farmers regarding the selection of seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides. The study showed that in selecting the brands to buy, farmers are making a product quality criteria important in addition to brand credibility.

Personal creditors according to Source Credibility Theory are used in judgment effectiveness by Keng et al. (2023) in their study of efficacy by SMI. They found that high credibility among influencers is a key driver in purchase behaviour, as is mobile convenience and consumer attitudes. The study found trusted influencers do have a positive impact on consumer perceptions and buying decisions when they communicate with authenticity.

There have been 251 studies on influencer marketing, synthesised into a comprehensive meta-analysis by Pan et al. (2025). Their results indicated that the following attributes of an influencer have a significant effect on purchase intention and behavioural response: informational value, influencer credibility, authenticity, and communication quality. The study found the content quality is one of the most effective indicators of the success of influencer marketing.

Barari et al. (2026) conducted another meta-analysis including 71 studies that showed that Influencer marketing has a positive impact on the level of consumer engagement and intention to purchase via perceived credibility, and attractiveness. Their findings also confirmed that there are moderation effects on the consumer's reactions around promoted products' characteristics of the message, product, platform characteristics, and expertise of the influencers.

Adopting the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S–O–R) model, Liu et al. (2026) examined the roles of stimulus (social media), organism (resonance), and response (intention to purchase) on the impact of the VINs on consumers' intention to buy organic food. They proposed and found authenticity, trustworthiness and attractiveness have positive relationship with buy intention via increased Consumer engagement as shown through their Structural equation modelling. This study offers solid theory on the examination of the characteristics of influencers in the settings of agricultural marketing.

In "Influencer Expertise and Appeal in Promoting Sustainable Consumption", Wang et al. examine the potential of the expertise and appeal of these top influencers to foster sustainable consumption. After studying them, they found that trusted and credible influencers can substantially enhance levels of trust, consumer attitudes and purchase intentions regarding agricultural and food products, thereby making expertise a big marketing advantage.

In a study published in the JAFR (2026), the type and framing of the messages of the influencers about the nutrition of beef were investigated on Instagram. The results revealed that EBM content from influencer(s) with credentials had higher levels of acceptance and positive consumer attitudes compared to the promotion-based model using advice, highlighting the value of content quality and influencer authenticity or competence.

Singh and Sharma (2025) studied the farmers' attitudes towards the use of SM in agriculture marketing. They have found that farmers are increasingly using SM to get market information, engage in communication with buyers and getting agricultural knowledge. Digital platforms subsequently helped to make more information available and promoted the use of innovative farming practices.

Cheung, Lee and Thadani (2009) had proven that the impact of eWOM on consumer trust and purchase intention could be mainly explained by paradigm aspects of information quality and source credibility. While their action took place off the farm, their results are significant, as SMI' recommendations can be regarded as a sophisticated version of electronic word-of-mouth.

It has been shown by Erkan and Evans, (2016) that information quality, credibility, usefulness and consumers' information needs have a positive relationship with purchase intentions via SM. They focused on the need to provide a quality content to consumer's confidence during purchase decision making.

In general, the vast body of work out there shows that the credibility and authenticity of an influencer, their expertise, engagement, and content quality all impact consumers' buying decisions. But there is little empirical research focusing on these linkages between farmers' acquisition of agricultural production factors, specifically in the context of developing economies. This research attempts to bridge that gap by incorporating the farmer's characteristics along with SMCQ in a broader model to explain farmers' buying decision.

Objectives:

1. To assess the influence of SMI on FPD of agribusiness inputs.
2. To evaluate the impact of SMCQ on FPD.
3. To examine the joint effect of the SMCQ and SMI on the FPD.

3. Methodology

The approach of this study is research and its type is quantitative, descriptive and explanatory. Data collection will be done by using a structured questionnaire, that will be given to the farmers who avail social media in their agricultural pursuit. The study area will be sampled at multiple stages using random sampling to produce a sample of 400. Data collected would be analysed in the examination of the relationships among the study variables.

4. Result and Analysis

The number of questionnaires given to the farmers who access agricultural information through social media is 400. A total of 385 completed and consistent questionnaires were included in the analysis representing a 96.25% response rate.

Internal consistency between the items of the scales is excellent, with the scores within the Alpha values range of 0.887 to 0.914, which is higher than the recommended value of 0.70. The overall reliability coefficient value of 0.903, testifies that the questionnaire is very reliable for further statistical analysis.

The scores higher than 4.00 signify high level of respondents agreeing that social media influence and good digital content have a positive effect on their buying of agricultural inputs. The relatively low standard deviations suggest consistency in respondents' opinions.

The measurement model shows a good model fit. All GoF indices meet the recommended measurement model standards, providing further confirmation of the validity of the measurement model and supporting further analysis of the structure.

All items in the AVE scores are greater than 0.50, and all are greater than 0.70 for Composite Reliability; thus, convergent validity and construct reliability are present.

From the SEM results, it can be seen that SMI significantly and positively influence farmers' purchase decisions, which is indicated by a coefficient ($\beta = 0.451$) with a significant value $p < 0.001$. Thus, it means that farmers' buying decisions are influenced from trusted persons who, through experience, demonstration, and recommendation help to shape farmers' buying preferences. This means that H11 is accepted and H01 is rejected.

Also, quality of information presented via social media plays significant role in their farmer purchase decisions ($\beta = 0.392$, $p < 0.001$). Farmers are more likely to buy agricultural products when content on the social media is relevant, informative, credible, and easy to read. Hence, H02 is rejected and H12 is accepted.

The performance of the structural model is acceptable, having explained 64.2% of the variation in farmers' purchase decisions. This suggests that together SMI and the quality of social media content explain a significant part of farmers' purchasing behaviour and the remaining variations are due to other influences not captured in the model.

Results indicate that SMI as well as quality of social media contents were both influential in the buying decisions of farmers for agricultural inputs. Observed amongst the two predictors, the influence of SMI is slightly stronger ($\beta = 0.451$) as compared to content quality ($\beta = 0.392$) demonstrating the role of credible SMI in agricultural marketing. The model has proven acceptable reliability, validity and goodness of fit and demonstrates that digital influencer marketing and high-quality social media is an effective instrument for farmers to make their buying decisions.

5. Discussion

The study shows that social media influencer and the quality of social media impact greatly into the choice of farmers in purchasing agricultural inputs. Farmers' trust in recommendations from trusted sources, such as real-field demonstrations, experienced farmers, and agricultural experts, is higher, with SMI as one of them. Good, useful, credible, easily-understood social media communications also help to minimise uncertainty and enable farmers to make purchase decisions. The results showed that electronic platforms are a successful medium for disseminating agricultural information and awareness about products. Hence, the need for agricultural input companies to come up with significant collaborative strategies with credible influencers and produce accurate information, engaging and education on quality agricultural input to enhance farmers' trust in agricultural input use.

6. Conclusion

This research finds that SMI are one of the important factors that farmers consider when purchasing farming inputs, as is also the quality of the products on social media. Farmers are turning increasingly to digital platforms to gain assured information, to make product comparisons before purchasing decisions and to get recommendations

before they buy. The results suggest that credible influencers and more informative and quality content builds conferred farmer confidence and lowers perceived risk that improves agricultural inputs adoption. The use of digital communication is growing in rural areas and with it the importance of social media as a marketing medium for agricultural enterprises has grown.

Recommendations

It is recommended that agricultural input companies enhance their digital marketing efforts by partnering with credible agricultural influencers with facts on the ground and farmers' trust in agriculture. A focus should be on producing accurate, informative and easily-understood content for social media such as product demonstrations, field trials and education videos. Digital skills training for the entire supply chain should be encouraged by policy makers, agricultural extension agents and agribusiness companies, and the responsible use and management of social media for providing accurate, up-to-date agricultural information to farmers. These will help responsible and effective procurement practices, boost the use of good agricultural and forestry practices and facilitate increased agricultural output.

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