The impact of social media on rural area: A bibliometric analysis

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Abstract: The number of general retail visits has decreased worldwide due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Individuals who previously used social media for commercial transactions now choose e-commerce. Social media allows clients to voice their opinions during crises, boosting product visibility. This study investigates the use of bibliometric analysis to shape social media use in "rural areas" to better understand "social media" in these places. Scholarly articles on rural social media share these findings. Scopus was used to collect "social media" and "rural areas" data. Social media use in rural regions was examined in 119 publications. These articles were used to identify patterns and predict the future. Multiple social media and rural area articles were used to classify and examine distribution states to find key research advancements and divisions. This study explored rural social media use and related research gaps. Synthesizing the findings provides a solid framework for future research. This study examines marketing research, focusing on social media and rural locations. It also discusses the value of social media journals for businesses, developing research trends and future opportunities in rural social media organization, and identifying critical business performance indicators. Rural social media's purpose. The capability framework can help find new marketing research avenues.

Keywords: social media, marketing, rural areas, digital marketing, bibliometric

1. Introduction

Digital technology encompasses any techniques, devices, systems, or resources that facilitate the generation, storage, or processing of data in an electronic format. Examples that came to mind are social media, internet gaming, multimedia, and cell phones. Furthermore, the term "digital learning" encompasses several educational approaches that utilize technology. The advent of digital technologies has significantly transformed the approach to marketing across several academic disciplines and at advanced educational levels. The advent of the twenty-first century has led to a significant transformation in the manner in which individuals engage with and receive messages owing to the pervasive influence of social media and digital marketing (Crittenden & Crittenden, 2015). In the past twenty years, the field of digital marketing (DM) has significantly altered the landscape of global marketing. The utilization of digital marketing technologies and tools has the potential to enhance traditional marketing strategies more successfully, as the pervasive influence of digitalization becomes increasingly prominent. Digital marketing tools are often regarded as highly effective means of engaging with clients and attracting their attention (Ravi & Rajasekaran, 2023). This transformation has been achieved through the adoption of metric driven approaches emphasizing objectivity, relationship building, and interactivity. Various electronic media and tools including social media platforms, television and radio channels, SMS messaging, email communication, search engines, and websites, have played pivotal role in facilitating these advancements. The incorporation of innovative technologies and methodologies in the realm of digital advertising and marketing has yielded several advantages, including enhanced convenience, expanded outreach, improved cost efficiency, and the ability to overcome spatial and temporal limitations. Digital marketing encompasses the utilization of various technological advancements, such as artificial intelligence (AI) and the Internet of Things (IoT), to effectively attain marketing objectives in both consumer-to-consumer and business-to-consumer contexts (Buhalis & Volchek, 2021; Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019; Dwivedi et al., 2021; Herhausen et al., 2020; Petrescu et al., 2020). Digital marketing platforms built upon retail platforms such as Amazon, iTunes, Flipkart, and Booking.com, as well as social media marketing communities such as YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn, serve as complementary and alternative approaches to traditional marketing strategies (Dwivedi et al., 2015; Gensler et al., 2012; Gensler et al., 2013; Kapoor et al., 2018).

In marketing activities, social media tools are regarded as channels through which individuals establish connections and exchange information and/or opinions (Kaplan, 2015). The distinctive attributes of these organisms include their dynamic nature, interconnectedness, egalitarianism, and interactive behavior (Peters et al., 2013). Social media has brought about three significant transformations in the marketplace. Social media platforms facilitate the establishment of connections between companies and consumers in manners that were previously unavailable. The facilitation of social connections is

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facilitated by a multitude of platforms, including but not limited to social networking sites (e.g., Facebook), microblogging sites (e.g., Twitter), and content communities (e.g., YouTube). These platforms enable the formation of social networks based on shared interests and values (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Hence, a comprehensive definition encompasses the entirety of the following elements as they pertain to the present study: Many viewpoints about customer-focused marketing (Yang et al., 2017) decision-making and customer relationship management (CRM) (Lewis et al., 2013) social interactions and media (Berezan et al., 2017; Krishen et al., 2016), Business marketing for events, advertising for destinations, online promotional material marketing, electronic word of mouth (eWOM), and digital advertising analytics are all illustrative examples of corporate event marketing (Lacobucci et al., 2019), online sentiment analysis (Schubert, 2011) and virtual marketing communities (Jansen et al., 2009).

Therefore, the main objective of this study is to critically examine the existing body of literature pertaining to the utilization and impact of social media platforms within rural regions. The study of social media in rural areas was performed through the utilization of publications sourced from the Scopus database. The primary objective of this bibliometric analysis report is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. This will involve identifying significant researchers and institutions within the field, assessing the effect of their research, recognizing emerging trends, and ultimately providing recommendations for future research opportunities. The primary objectives of this study are as follows:

1. This study aimed to ascertain the number of scholarly papers pertaining to social media in rural areas, including an examination of the authors, sources, connections, and countries that exhibit the highest publication rates in this domain.
2. This analysis aims to examine the thematic content and interrelationships among research publications focused on social media usage in rural areas.
3. Examine the intellectual framework of research on social media usage in rural areas.
4. The social structure of social media in rural areas should be explored.

The methodology utilized in this research is described in the subsequent section. Subsequently, the findings are presented and subjected to scholarly discussion, wherein the study conclusions are expounded upon and recommendations for prospective avenues of inquiry are offered in the conclusion.

2. Background of the study

Due to the dynamic nature of the social media research field, it is crucial for researchers in this area to possess knowledge pertaining to key areas of interest, their development over time, new research trends, and prominent research collaborations. Internationally recognized worldwide organizations that are engaged in the marketing of branded items are prominent participants in the realm of social media. This work takes a comprehensive and inclusive approach to investigating research and primary researchers in the field of social media in rural areas. This is accomplished by analyze the bibliographic data of relevant research papers. The globalization efforts of the 20th century resulted in heightened competition within the marketing sector, leading to an increase in the quality of products and services. The marketing sector necessitates global distribution and the promotion of goods and services through international advertising. In 1994, Hotwired, an online magazine, entered into a transaction with AT&T by selling them a banner advertisement. Subsequently, AT&T proceeded to exhibit this advertisement on its website, pioneering the concept of online advertising (Hoffman et al., 1998). The emergence of social media marketing (SMM) and its associated marketing analytics can be attributed to the capacity of social networks to effectively amplify the reach of digital marketing at a cost that is considered fair. Compared to traditional forms of marketing, social media marketing (SMM) is a comprehensive approach that facilitates the promotion of products and services through various social media platforms (Dwivedi et al., 2015).

The rapid development of interactive social media and digital marketing has been facilitated by several significant milestones in the field of information and communication technology (ICT). These milestones include the widespread adoption of the Internet following the 1990s, the introduction of smartphones, the reduction in the cost of online communication, and the widespread popularity of online social networks such as Facebook and Twitter. The decline of the newspaper industry, characterized by the lowest daily circulations in 2018 since 1940, has concurrently resulted in an increase in consumer inclination toward internet marketing and advertising (Grieco, 2020). To widely categorize important research subjects, the current paper offers a unique overview of the scope of social media in rural areas from a multidisciplinary perspective. Our review extends the previous studies by including a content production method and investigating multiple kinds of advertising and social media in rural areas, in addition to recognizing social media as a strategic direction. Through an assessment of the bibliometric data of research articles published on social media in rural areas, this bibliometric analysis is expanded to disclose fundamental research collaborations, their development, and connected research subjects. This work used a methodology of computational techniques applied to the bibliometric information of social media in rural region research articles because processing the literature review manually could be laborious. The bibliometric data of the research literature are used to investigate the writers, sources, linkages, and nations with the highest publishing rates in this discipline.
3. Methodology

3.1. Defining the appropriate search terms

The concept employed encompasses a fusion of two interdisciplinary elements: social media marketing and rural areas. To comprehensively address the various aspects of social media marketing in rural areas, it was imperative to incorporate the relevant keywords associated with each domain. The two strings and sets of keywords utilized for Scopus data extraction and document selection. After conducting an initial literature review, the authors identified the following key terms. Social media marketing (SMM) is a strategic marketing approach in which social platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok are used to effectively promote brands, expand target audience reach, generate website traffic, and enhance sales performance. Likewise, a rural area can be defined as a geographical region situated beyond urban centers and municipalities. Rural areas are characterized by a relatively low population density and the presence of small settlements. Rural regions are commonly characterized as encompassing agricultural and forestry sectors. This study examines bibliometric data pertaining to research on social media in rural areas. The analysis focused on citation networks, authorship patterns, and co-authorship networks within the research publications. The initial step involved gathering bibliographic data from the Scopus database.

3.2. Data collection

Given the substantial presence of double-blind peer-reviewed articles published in high-impact factor journals within Scopus, the researchers opted to utilize this database to collect the necessary data (Groff et al., 2021). A meticulous methodology was employed to ascertain the ultimate aggregate of the 149 articles documented. The concepts of "social media" and "rural area" were employed to encompass the content derived from the various disciplines outlined by including relevant articles. The inclusion of novel publications in subsequent papers leads to the presence of inaccurate bibliographical and bibliometric data. Consequently, data obtained from Scopus or any other online database are susceptible to inaccuracies (Donthu et al., 2021). Additionally, the tool mentioned earlier is a method grounded in empirical data that is employed to obtain a comprehensive understanding of certain areas of research and to identify recurring patterns throughout previously published scholarly works. Additionally, it assists scholars in identifying areas of inquiry that have not been adequately addressed and making original contributions to the field. The process encompasses data collection, subsequent processing, and subsequent statistical analysis. Researchers from various fields, including management, have utilized bibliometric analysis as a methodological approach (Podsakoff et al., 2008), in marketing (Martínez-López et al., 2018) entrepreneurship (Landstrom et al., 2012), economics (Bonilla et al., 2015), innovation (Fagerberg et al., 2012), and accounting (Merigo & Yang, 2016). Hence, utilizing the aforementioned extracted data without conducting additional analysis has the potential to yield a precarious and inaccurate diagnosis. Consequently, we undertook a series of steps to cleanse and arrange the data. By the recommendations put forth (Zupic & Ćater, 2015; Donthu et al., 2021), we conducted a comprehensive exploration of bibliographic and bibliometric data, employing various techniques for visualizing and interpreting the obtained results. The analysis in question was built upon utilizing the Biblioshiny program and the R-studio statistical software, both of which serve as the fundamental tools for this scientometric investigation. The present methodology elucidates the sequential procedures employed for the identification of the database, the selection of pertinent records and articles by predetermined criteria, and the establishment of the study's framework and dynamics.

A total of 149 documents about the phenomenon of digital disconnect were identified through the utilization of the specified databases and search criteria. These documents were deemed relevant to the present research due to the inclusion of keywords within the titles and summaries of the respective articles. Upon removal of duplicate entries, the cumulative count of articles was 119, as illustrated. Additionally, four additional regulations were implemented to restrict or eliminate the content contained within the articles and associated documents. The aforementioned rules were delineated follows: articles that did not meet the criteria of being a scholarly study or scientific review were excluded from consideration. Only articles written in the English language were excluded from consideration. The selected papers were required to pertain to either social media or rural areas. The selected papers were required to provide a clear description and elucidation of their primary objectives and research inquiries.

3.3. Selection of the techniques for analysis

As elucidated by (Goyal & Kumar, 2020), bibliometric analysis encompasses a repertoire of methodologies employed for conducting quantitative investigations of textual materials and associated datasets. This method allows for the extraction of novel insights from the literature reviews, as demonstrated by (Suominen et al., 2018; Groff et al., 2021). Consequently, this approach serves as a valuable tool for enhancing the existing body of research. The essential tasks encompassed in this scholarly endeavor include the production and distribution of biographical works centered around specific themes, the identification of prevailing patterns within the field of study, and the evaluation of research publications that resemble guidebooks (Kamal et al., 2022). The utilization of various bibliometric analysis techniques, such as authorship analysis,
citation analysis, bibliographic coupling, co-citation analysis, and co-word analysis, represents a subset of the methodologies employed by scholars to examine the biographical information assembled by (Donthu et al., 2021) (Figure 1).

Figure 1 PRISMA flow chart.

3.4. Research question

RQ1. Who are the leading authors, institutions, and publications in the scientific literature on possible solutions to social media in rural areas?
RQ2. What main topics do the published papers consider?

4. Result and interpretation

4.1. Performance analysis

The publication patterns pertaining to the domain of social media in rural areas are visually represented in Figure. The year 2021 proved to be highly productive, but endeavors in this particular domain were not initiated until 2010. While online advertising is a relatively recent phenomenon, preliminary research indicates that online advertising is more prevalent than
social media in rural areas. The annual production rate has likewise experienced a significant increase. It is anticipated that this field of study will experience growth in the coming years, as evidenced by the trends observed during the past year (Figure 2).

4.2. The Most Productive Publications

The research findings revealed that a total of 119 documents were analyze, with exclusions made for documents in languages other than English, book chapters, conference papers, reviews, notes, and letters. The tabulated data from these documents provided insights into the most productive journals and the specific time period of their publication. The topic of sustainability (Switzerland) garnered the highest number of publications on social media within rural regions, underscoring the significance of conducting research on social media within rural areas. This tendency highlights a dedication to sharing the outcomes of novel developments in social media and their implications for rural communities. The Journal of Rural Studies was the second most common journal in terms of publication volume (Figure 3).

4.3. Distribution of the Authors

Several articles were published by a group of writers, including Bandyopadhyay S, Banerjee S, Bardhan A, Ceccato V, Chen B, Das S, Dey P, Kavoura A, Mandal KS, and Nechita F. In rural regions, the aforementioned writers have exhibited the
highest level of engagement on social media platforms. However, co-authoring publications were typically restricted to a maximum of two or three writers, with no study surpassing a total of five co-authors. Based on the impact index, the writers who have received the greatest number of citations are Bandyopadhyay S, Banerjee S, Bardhan A, Ceccato V, Chen B, Das S, Dey P, Kavoura A, Mandal KS, and Nechita F (Figure 4).

Figure 2 Distribution of the Authors.

4.4. Author Collaboration

Upon performing an analysis to ascertain the provenance of the author and the institutional affiliation of the published information, it becomes evident that there is an increasing trend in author collaboration. The prevalence of authors affiliated with the same institution and country suggests that there is room for improvement in fostering international and multidisciplinary collaboration for conducting additional research on the use of social media in rural areas. This investigation revealed the quantities of documents per author and co-authors per document and the collaboration network associated with single-authored documents. The aforementioned numbers exhibit a notable degree of decrease, albeit with a discernible upward trend (Figure 5).

Figure 5 Author Collaboration.
4.5. Results Ordered by Country and Institution

Numerous authors affiliated with renowned academic institutions across several scientific disciplines have consistently produced scholarly publications over the examined research timeframe, thereby altering prevailing patterns of university dominance. The proliferation of articles and the creation of collaborative networks, particularly in rural areas, have garnered increasing interest among researchers in the field of marketing. Consequently, the examination of social media’s role in these places has emerged as a compelling research topic. The discernible consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic for social media are anticipated to extend their influence to the academic domain. The response of the academic community engaged in the study of social media in rural regions to the enduring consequences of the epidemic as does the trajectory of future research in this domain, remains uncertain. The countries with the highest number of publications are the United States of America, India, China, Australia, South Africa, the United Kingdom, Malaysia, Sweden, Canada, and Spain. The collaborative globe map, referred to as a “Figure – 6” visually represents the information discussed earlier. The nations that are shaded in deep blue exhibit the highest level of engagement in the field of rural social media research.

![Country Collaboration Map](image)

Figure 3 Country collaboration map.

The presented figure 7 showcases the social media study conducted in rural areas, which has been published by several worldwide colleges and organizations. The University of Kwazulu-Natal has been identified as the institution with the highest number of published publications, owing in part to its collaborative associations with the University of the Witwatersrand, the Human Sciences Research Council, and the African Health Research Institute (AHRI). Significant collaboration was also noted among the University of Georgia, University of Tennessee, and Texas A&M University.

![Collaboration among the university](image)

Figure 4 Collaboration among the university.
4.6. Main Research Topics in the Articles

The figure presented below illustrates the quantity of papers produced on different aspects of the research subject. The data were acquired by a comprehensive examination of papers pertaining to many subfields, including social media, rural locations, and rural populations. These subfields constitute approximately 50% of the terms employed in rural social media. The study of keywords is an invaluable tool that offers important insights into research patterns and prevalent themes. At least one of the aforementioned terms, including “digital technology”, “social media”, “rural”, and “IOT”, was observed to be among the most frequently utilized keywords. This exemplifies the extensive scope of this field, notwithstanding the limited number of publications that directly address the principal topic (Figure 8).

4.7. Results of science mapping and visualization

The figure illustrates the 10 most significant terms. The graph illustrates that the terms “social media”, “rural area” and “rural population” are highly prevalent within the given domain. The treemap depicted in Figure 5 illustrates that the term "social media" accounts for 44% of the total occurrences, while "rural area" and "rural population" represent 38% and 19%, respectively. Figure 4 shows the graph representing the growth of words. The graph reveals a notable increase in the prevalence of phrases such as "social media", “rural area” and “rural population”.

A trend topic analysis was conducted to find the top three trending keywords in the domain over the past decade. The analysis field was configured to "Author's Keywords" with a minimum word frequency threshold of five. Similarly, the figure depicts a comparable pattern to that observed in the graph representing the growth in word usage. The growing prominence of social media and rural areas has prompted the utilization of keywords in the latest phase of research (2018-2022). This area of study has utilized conceptual frameworks such as “rural”, “COVID-19”, “Facebook”, “social media”, and “digital divide” (Figure 9, 10 and 11).
5. Discussion and Final considerations

The impact of information and communication technology on global economies is substantial in the present era. The utilization of extensive information derived from a vast number of social media users and subjected to analysis by social media analytics tools provides valuable digital assets, or digital inputs, that contribute to the growth and development of the digital economy. The present study provides a comprehensive examination of the evolution of research trends and the contemporary dynamics of research. This research commences by performing a preliminary analysis to monitor the growth of social media in rural regions within the context of academic research papers. The objective is to identify the most productive social media platforms in rural areas, together with their coauthors, and the key research themes pertaining to interactive social media in rural contexts. The advent of digitalization has led to an expansion in the area of economic activity. The primary objective of this study was to provide a comprehensive review of the existing body of research on the utilization of social media in rural regions. This study employed bibliometric analysis as a methodological approach to comprehensively examine the conceptual framework of social media in rural areas. This analysis utilized academic references sourced from the Scopus database to establish the prominence of social media analytics as a subject of research in rural areas. The quantity of scholarly investigations conducted on the subject matter is progressively escalating on an annual basis. This upward trajectory implies a burgeoning inclination toward the utilization of knowledge derived from the scientific literature. To
facilitate the development of knowledge in a given field, it is imperative to broaden the scope of related research, thereby enabling additional investigations and fostering the emergence of novel viewpoints and inventive ideas. Hence, through the assessment of prominent authors, nations/regions, organizations, journals, collaboration, and co-occurrence within the field of study, the present investigation sought to ascertain active areas of research and uncover emerging patterns. The study’s findings indicate that professionals studying social media analytics have shifted their attention towards underdeveloped countries. The nations where a growing volume of research is now being conducted include the United States of America, India, and China. The density visualization of the keyword analysis reveals that study topics such as “social media” “rural area” and “rural population” are widely explored in the academic domain. These findings unequivocally demonstrate that rural areas had the highest volume of articles pertaining to social media within 2021. Moreover, the year in question witnessed the highest number of citations, suggesting a growing interest among scholars and a heightened significance of the subject matter. The findings also indicate that there was a significant increase in the number of articles and citations in 2017. Moreover, the research incorporated a compilation of the foremost 10 authors who have produced the highest quantity of scholarly articles pertaining to the subject matter. The individuals included in the list are Bandyopadhyay S, Banerjee S, Bardhan A, Ceccato V, Chen B, Das S, Dey P, Kavoura A, Mandal KS, and Nechita F. The findings additionally ascertain that the preeminent authors are renowned for their contributions to the discourse on social media inside rural regions. The publication's geographical research encompasses the United States of America, India, China, Australia, South Africa, the United Kingdom, Malaysia, Sweden, Canada, and Spain. According to the examination of journals, the journal "Sustainability" ranked first in terms of the number of papers published, followed by "Journal of Rural Studies" and "Social Science and Medicine," which also contributed significantly to the discourse on this subject matter. The findings demonstrate the diverse aspects of social media's impact on the economic and societal aspects of rural regions.

The present investigation contributes to the existing scholarly discourse by providing a comprehensive overview of the current state of knowledge and identifying notable deficiencies, emerging patterns, and avenues for future scholarly inquiry. The accomplishment was attained through a meticulous selection of published publications within the specific topic of research, followed by a comprehensive examination of these articles utilizing both bibliometric and content analytic techniques. The process of identifying overarching research themes enhances the understanding of the subject matter at a more profound level. The subjects encompassed in this study comprise social media, rural population dynamics, rural marketing strategies, and the globalization of digital marketing practices. Due to the profound impact of technological advancements on the worldwide economy, there is a growing imperative for further scholarly investigation to elucidate the necessity of creative strategies in fostering the expansion of social media platforms within rural regions. Using R studio, the authors successfully identified the key contributors to social media in rural areas, including writers, publications, journals, organizations, and countries. The visualization of networks and density provided evidence of the emergence of novelty in the development of subjects within the examined themes. This endeavor is undertaken with the intention of promoting comprehension of the interrelationships among the diverse themes. As a result of this endeavor, researchers within the field are now able to quantitatively measure diverse facets of the subject matter and examine subtopics within broader frameworks.

6. Limitations and future directions

The present work acknowledges its limitations while also providing a basis for future avenues of investigation. One restriction of this nature relates to the significant number of publications utilized in the bibliometric analysis. The Large corpus of literature encompasses a wide array of studies and themes, yet it also results in an overwhelming abundance of related knowledge and information. Future meta-analytic studies pertaining to this topic may narrow down the scope of substantive domains and focus on a more limited selection of disciplines and topic areas, enabling a more comprehensive and precise examination. One inherent limitation of bibliometric reviews is their tendency to prioritize affiliations and countries over theories and frameworks. Despite our evaluation encompassing substantial topic areas over time and providing author and citation information, this emphasis on affiliations and countries may overshadow the examination of theoretical and conceptual frameworks (Paul & Criado, 2020).

The absence of interconnections, deeper relationships, moderators, and mediators among the identified issue categories represents a potential drawback in our research. Hence, future investigations could explore the interconnections between coauthorships, thematic patterns, and more profound substantive associations. Hence, future studies should incorporate these particular data. The utilization of the Scopus database as the primary source of data imposed certain constraints on our investigation. One limitation of the present study is its disproportionate focus on the bibliometric analysis technique at the expense of identifying prospective avenues for future research. Due to our prioritization of presenting a comprehensive historical perspective, we encountered limitations in accommodating our proposition of a nascent conceptual framework.

Ethical considerations

https://www.malque.pub/ojs/index.php/mr
Conflict of Interest

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