NEW ERA AGRICULTURE MAGAZINE

Development of mobile based technology transfer application to empower the small farmers.

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Abstract: -

Agriculture is the primary livelihood source for small and marginal farmers in many developing nations, yet they continue to face severe challenges such as limited access to timely information, low awareness of modern farming techniques, lack of proper market linkages, and vulnerability to climate and pest-related risks. Traditional extension services often fall short of reaching farmers effectively due to infrastructural, financial, and human resource constraints. In this context, the development of mobile-based technology transfer applications emerges as a powerful tool for bridging the gap between research, extension, and farmers. A mobile-based application can act as a one-stop platform providing real-time weather forecasts, soil health recommendations, pest and disease management strategies, crop advisory services, and market intelligence. It can also deliver updates on government schemes, crop insurance, and credit facilities, thereby promoting financial inclusion. With features like local language support, voice commands, multimedia content, and offline access, such applications ensure inclusivity and accessibility for diverse groups of farmers, even those with limited literacy. Integration of GPS and data analytics further enables location-specific and crop-specific recommendations, improving the precision of agricultural practices. The Impact of such applications is multi-fold: they empower farmers with knowledge for better decision- making, enhance productivity, reduce risks, and improve profitability by facilitating direct market linkages. Additionally, they strengthen the agricultural innovation system by connecting farmers with research institutions, extension agencies, cooperatives, and peer networks. Ultimately, mobile-based technology transfer applications serve not only as technological innovations but also as socio-economic interventions that promote sustainable agriculture, food security, rural development, and inclusive growth.

Keywords: Mobile applications; Technology transfer; Small farmers; ICT in agriculture; Precision farming; Agricultural extension; Market linkages; Sustainable rural development.

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Introduction:

With the rapid growth of smartphones, affordable internet services, and advancements in Information and Communication Technology (ICT), mobile apps have created new opportunities for technology transfer and farmer empowerment. These applications now provide real-time weather forecasts, soil health data, pest and disease management strategies, and market price updates directly to farmers. They also facilitate access to government schemes, financial services, and expert advisory systems, reducing dependence on middlemen and ensuring fair returns. Recent advances in mobile app development have introduced features like artificial intelligence (AI)-based predictive analytics, GPS-enabled location-specific advisories, image recognition for pest identification, and interactive multimedia modules in local languages, making agricultural knowledge more precise, accessible, and inclusive. Such innovations not only enhance decision-making and productivity at the farm level but also contribute to broader goals of sustainable agriculture, food security, and rural development. Therefore, understanding recent developments in mobile-based agricultural technologies is essential for policymakers, researchers, and extension professionals seeking to modernize farming practices and empower farmers in the digital era.

Benefits of Mobile Apps in Agriculture

1. Weather Forecasting – Helps farmers plan sowing, irrigation, and harvesting by providing accurate weather updates.
2. Crop Advisory – Offers guidance on improved farming practices, seed selection, fertilizer use, and pest/disease management.
3. Market Information – Provides updated market prices, reducing farmers' dependence on middlemen and ensuring better returns.
4. Financial Services – Facilitates access to crop insurance, loans, and digital payments, promoting financial inclusion.
5. Government Schemes – Informs farmers about subsidies, welfare programs, and new agricultural policies.
6. Networking and Knowledge Sharing – Connects farmers with experts, extension agents, and fellow farmers for solving problems collectively.

Examples of Agricultural Mobile Apps in India

1. Kisan Suvidha – Provides weather updates, market prices, input dealers, and government scheme details.
2. Pusa Krishi – Developed by ICAR-IARI, offering information on

improved crop varieties and farming techniques.

3. IFFCO Kisan App – Gives personalized crop advice, weather forecasts, and market information.
4. mKisan Portal/App – Offers SMS-based advisories on crops, weather, and government initiatives.

AgriApp – Provides information on modern farming practices, crop advisory, and market linkages.

Review of literature

1. **Mobile Applications in Agricultural Extension :-** Mobile apps have emerged as efficient tools for technology transfer, bridging the gap between research institutions and farmers.
   - ☞ Studies highlight that apps such as mKisan Portal, Kisan Suvidha, and Pusa Krishi deliver timely information on weather, soil health, pest management, and market prices (Government of India, 2016; ICAR-IARI, 2016).
   - ☞ Research emphasizes their role in reducing information asymmetry and empowering small farmers (Mittal & Mehar, 2016).
2. **Advances in Precision Farming through Mobile Apps :-** Integration of GPS, remote sensing, and IoT in apps allows location-specific advisories.
   - ☞ AI-powered tools now offer predictive analytics for yield estimation and image recognition for pest/disease detection (Kamilaris et al., 2017).
   - ☞ Apps like Plantix and AgriApp are widely studied for their diagnostic and advisory features.
3. **Market Access and Financial Inclusion :-** Mobile apps are reported to reduce farmers' dependency on middlemen by providing direct access to mandi prices and e-markets (Aker, 2011).
   - ☞ Apps like AgriMarket, IFFCO Kisan, and eNAM support better price realization and promote transparency.
   - ☞ Studies also note their contribution to digital payments, crop insurance, and credit access (World Bank, 2019).
4. **Socio-Economic Impact of Mobile Apps :-** Research shows that mobile apps contribute to higher productivity, reduced input costs, and increased income (Goyal, 2010; Mittal & Tripathi, 2009).
   - ☞ They also enhance knowledge sharing and peer-to-peer learning through community features and social platforms.
   - ☞ Limitations include digital illiteracy, gender disparities in access, and weak internet infrastructure in rural areas.
5. **Recent Trends and Future Directions :-** Use of artificial intelligence (AI), machine

learning (ML), blockchain, and big data in mobile apps for agriculture is gaining momentum.

- Advances in voice-based apps in local languages are expanding accessibility for smallholder farmers.
- Literature suggests that mobile apps will play a vital role in achieving sustainable agriculture, climate-smart farming, and rural transformation in the coming decades (FAO, 2021).

Conclusion

The proliferation of mobile applications in agriculture represents a transformative development in strengthening farmers' capabilities and livelihoods. These digital tools have democratized access to timely information, enabling farmers to take data-driven decisions on crop planning, pest and disease management, irrigation, and market participation. By minimizing risks and reducing uncertainties, mobile apps have contributed significantly to increasing farm productivity and income stability. Importantly, they have promoted inclusivity by connecting even small and marginal farmers to wider markets, financial services, and knowledge platforms. Moreover, mobile apps are reshaping rural socio-economic dynamics by fostering digital literacy, encouraging entrepreneurship, and enhancing farmers' resilience against climate variability. They serve as bridges between agricultural research institutions, extension systems, and grassroots farming communities, thereby strengthening technology transfer processes. At a larger scale, they contribute to building a more transparent, efficient, and sustainable agricultural value chain. Thus, mobile applications are not merely technological interventions but strategic enablers of empowerment and progress. With continuous innovation in artificial intelligence, big data, and IoT integration, the potential of mobile-based agricultural services will only grow in the future. Ensuring accessibility, affordability, and user-friendliness, particularly for marginalized farmers, will be crucial in realizing the full promise of these tools. In essence, mobile apps are accelerating the transition toward smart farming and inclusive rural development, thereby playing a vital role in the holistic upbringing of farmers.

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