

CONSTRAINTS FACED BY THE FARMERS ABOUT USE OF SMARTPHONE APPLICATIONS IN AGRICULTURE

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ABSTRACT

The present investigation was carried out in Anand district of Gujarat State. A list of the registered farmers at KVK, Anand were selected, who were receiving the agricultural information under mobile services. The purpose of this study was finding out the constraints and to suggestion for using smartphone application in agriculture. The major constraints faced by the Farmers about use of smartphone applications were lack of knowledge about various agricultural mobile applications available, lack of timely technical advice through mobile, fear of security of personal information for joining social media, lack of authenticity of information available online, lack of knowledge about smartphone functions, language barrier to operate/ use of mobile, high cost of data plans for mobile. And major suggestions were Major suggestions given by the farmers to overcome the constraints faced by them regarding use of smartphone applications were: Government should provide high speed data plan at low cost, timely Information should be provided in short and simple form, nonstop accessible network facilities should be made available in rural areas, Government should emphasize on personal data security.

Keywords : *smartphone, application, knowledge, constraints, suggestion*

INTRODUCTION

The 21st century agriculture is highly knowledge based. Information now has become one of the most critical inputs for profitable and sustainable agricultural development. The Indian telecom industry is the second largest in the world in terms of the number of subscribers. It involves application of innovative ways to use Information and Communication Technologies in the rural domain. The advancements in telecommunication can be utilized more smartly using smart mobile phone technology for providing accurate, timely, relevant information and services by user friendly ways to the farmers, thereby facilitating an environment for more remunerative agriculture. Given the development scenario in Indian agriculture, telecommunication movement is still evolving. Agriculture extension workers do not reach every farmer and every farmer cannot contact extension workers on regular basis. Hence, there is limited flow of information about the latest agricultural technologies.

OBJECTIVES

(1) To ascertain constraints faced by farmers about use of Smartphone applications

(2) To seek suggestions from farmers to overcome constraints regarding use of Smartphone applications

METHODOLOGY

The present investigation was carried out in Anand district of Gujarat State. A list of the registered farmers at KVK, Anand, who were receiving the agricultural information under mobile services was taken. The farmers registered at KVK, Anand was the highest in Sojitra taluka among all eight talukas of Anand district. As such Sojitra taluka was purposefully selected for the study. A random sampling was adopted for the selection of respondents. Thus, total 120 respondents were selected for the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Constraints faced by the respondents about use of smartphone applications

There may be many constraints on the path of farmers in use of smartphone applications. The data in this regard are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Constraints faced by the respondents about use of smartphone applications

(n=120)

Sr. No.	Constraints	Mean Score	Rank
1	Lack of knowledge about various agricultural mobile applications available	1.69	I
2	Lack of timely technical advice through mobile	1.58	II
3	Fear of security of personal information for joining social media	1.55	III
4	Lack of authenticity of information available online	1.54	IV
5	Language barrier to operate/ use of mobile	1.49	V
6	Lack of knowledge about smartphone functions	1.49	V
7	High cost of data plans for mobile	1.42	VI
8	Irrelevant content disturbance	1.40	VII
9	Issue of mobile coverage in isolated rural area	1.38	VIII
10	Lack of mobile repairing facility in rural area	1.30	IX
11	Issue of internet connectivity for communication	1.24	X
12	Frequent power failure effects on mobile charging in rural area.	1.20	XI
13	Difficulty to find relevant information due to large number of sources	0.48	XII
14	Complexity of technical words	0.34	XIII

It is evident from Table 1 that the farmers encounter many constraints about smartphone applications use. The major constraints included Lack of knowledge about various agricultural mobile applications available (I), Lack of timely technical advice through mobile (II), Fear of security of personal information for joining social media (III), Lack of authenticity of information available online (IV), Lack of knowledge about smartphone functions (V), Language barrier to operate/ use of mobile (V), High cost of data plans for mobile (VI), Irrelevant content disturbance (VII), Issue of mobile coverage in isolated rural area (VIII), Lack of mobile repairing facility in rural area (IX), Issue of internet

connectivity for communication (X), Frequent power failure effects on mobile charging in rural area (XI), Difficulty to find relevant information due to large number of sources (XII) and Complexity of technical words (XIII).

Suggestions to overcome constraints regarding use of smartphone applications

Efforts were made to ascertain suggestions given by the farmers to overcome the constraints faced by them regarding use of smartphone applications. The suggestions elicited from the farmers are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 : Suggestions given by the respondents to overcome constraints regarding use of smartphone applications

(n=120)

Sr. No.	Suggestions	Total Score	Per cent	Rank
1	Government should provide high speed data plan at low cost	74	61.66	I
2	Timely Information should be provided in short and simple form	70	58.33	II
3	Nonstop accessible network facilities should be made available in rural areas	67	55.83	III
4	Government should emphasize on personal data security	52	43.34	IV
5	Authentic information should be available on related web sites	49	40.83	V
6	Uninterrupted power supply in rural area should be provided	22	18.33	VI

The foremost suggestions included 'government should provide high speed data plan at low cost' (61.66 per cent), followed by 'timely Information should be provided in short and simple form' (58.33 per cent) and 'nonstop accessible network facilities should be made available in rural areas' (55.83 per cent).

Other important suggestions given by farmers to overcome the constraints in use of smartphone applications included 'government should emphasize on personal data security' (43.34 per cent), 'authentic information should be available on related web sites' (40.83 per cent) and 'uninterrupted power supply in rural area should be provided' (18.33 per cent).

CONCLUSION

Major suggestions given by the farmers to overcome the constraints faced by them regarding use of smartphone applications were: Government should provide high speed data plan at low cost, timely Information should be provided in short and simple form, through mobile, fear of security

of personal information for joining social media and lack of authenticity of information available online.

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