



## Opinion of Farmers Regarding Effectiveness of Information Dissemination through Kisan Suvidha Mobile Application in Surguja District of Chhattisgarh

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### ABSTRACT

The study was conducted in the Surguja district of Chhattisgarh in the Year 2016-17. The purpose of the study was to assess the effectiveness of *Kisan Suvidha* app. in transfer of latest technical information regarding agriculture to farmers of the district. The *Kisan Suvidha* app. was developed for transfer of quick, timely & need based appropriate information regarding agriculture and allied sectors. It was found that about one fourth (28%) of the respondents had the opinion that this app. is very useful, while more than half of the respondents (54%) opined that this app has medium level of usefulness. Regarding applicability of the information received through app, it was found that 52 per cent of the respondents reported that information received was applicable in crop production situation, need based, timely and content was readable. Need based information and timeliness was useful *i.e.* 84 per cent, and visibility of the content was 94.00 per cent, regarding social media.

**Key Words:** *Kisan Suvidha* spp, Perception, Effectiveness.

### INTRODUCTION

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) are becoming an important aspect of agriculture sector. Till now most of ICT initiatives by government were focused on 'World Wide Web. In the current scenario, the mobile phones are becoming effective way of delivering information and this medium has been used by Department of Agriculture Cooperatives and Farmers Welfare (DAC&FW) to develop '*Kisan Suvidha* mobile application (app). The app is designed primarily for farmers keeping in mind that location specific problems and information needs. The app is engineered to provide all information that a farmer or agriculture stakeholder in agriculture sector may require. On 19th March 2016, app was inaugurated by Hon'ble Prime Minister during 'Krishi Unnati Mela' in New Delhi. As on today, there are approximately 3 lakh active users of this app. The app is available in Hindi, English, Punjabi, Tamil

and Gujarati languages. The app has very simple interface with focus on providing information on six essential areas of farming *viz.*, weather forecast, input dealers, market prices, plant protection measures, agro-advisory and agronomic practices.

*Kisan Suvidha* is an omnibus mobile app developed to help farmers by providing relevant information to them quickly. With click of a button, they can get the information on weather forecast, dealers, market prices, agro-advisories, plant protection measures, IPM practices etc. Unique features like extreme weather alerts and market prices of commodity in nearest market and the maximum price in State as well as other parts of country have been added to empower farmers in the best possible manner. An additional tab directly connects the farmer with the *Kisan* call centre where technical graduates answer their queries. The design is simple and neat. To begin with, a farmer has to register the mobile number, choose

**Table 1. Perception of farmers *Kisan Suvidha* application.**

Sr. No.	Indicator	Response	
		No	Yes
1.	Timeliness	8(16%)	42(84%)
2.	Visibility of the content	03(6%)	47(94%)
3.	Cost effective	18 (40.0%)	32 (60%)

**Table 2. Opinion of farmers regarding effectiveness of technical information disseminated through *Kisan Suvidha* mobile application.**

Sr. No.	Indicator used	Response		
		Low	Medium	High
1.	Gain in knowledge	06(12%)	33(66%)	11(22%)
2.	Applicability of the information	05(10%)	19(38%)	26(52%)
3.	Need based information	02(4%)	06(12%)	42(84%)
4.	Usefulness of information	04(8%)	34(68%)	12(24%)

a language at present limited to Hindi and English and enter details of the state, district and block or sub-district.

The app is likely to have many takers as India is second largest smart phone market in the world with 87 million mobile Internet users in rural areas. For small farmers, who often sell their produce to local traders, this could be an important bargaining tool. Also, farmers can decide on whether to take their produce to the *mandi* or delay it based on information on current prices. Other information points are useful too. The plant protection button gives pest, weed and disease-related information as well as management practices for each stage of crop development from nursery to harvesting. The agro advisory section shows messages for farmers from district agriculture officials and state universities in their local language. These primarily deal with crop management practices based on the prevailing situation; say a remedy for a widespread pest attack or imminent showers. Farmers can also access names and mobile numbers of input dealers selling pesticides, seeds, fertiliser and machinery. This is a handy tool farmers can now make a call and compare prices and availability before they actually

head out to purchase these inputs. The agriculture ministry, which developed the app, describes it as an “omnibus for quick and relevant information”. Adding more local languages will take it a step further. Therefore, the purpose of the study was to assess the effectiveness of *Kisan Suvidha* app. in transfer of latest technical information regarding agriculture to farmers of the district.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was conducted in Chattisgarh district during the year 2016-17 with an aim to study the effectiveness of *Kisan Suvidha* app. The respondents of the study were purposively selected for assessing the effectiveness of recently developed mobile app designed for transfer of latest agricultural information to the farmers. For this study the six blocks of Surguja district i.e. Ambikapur, Sitapur, Lundra, Batoulii, Mainpat, and Udaipur were selected. The response of selected 50 farmers from these six blocks was studied using semi structured interview schedule developed. The data were analyzed by using appropriate statistical measurement such as percentage and mean etc.

## Information Dissemination through Kisan Suvidha Mobile Application

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Perception toward social media based technical information (*Kisan Suvidha* app)

Finding of the study revealed that majority of the respondents (84%) perceived that information received through *Kisan Suvidha* app was timely, however, some respondents perceived delivery of message as delayed (16%). The great majority (94%) perceived that the content was visible for the users (Table 1). The respondents (60%) also reported that the information sharing using mobile app was cost effective as compared to other media. Sharma *et al* (2012) reported that mobile phones were powerful tool of sharing agriculture information among farmers due to cost effectiveness, better network and easy availability. Nonetheless, there were some farmers who reported lack of visibility of content of mobile app (6%) and perceived information sharing as costly (40%). In totality respondents had favourable perception towards *Kisan Suvidha* app. Bhagya Lakshmi and Punima (2018) reported that majority of the respondents (64.4%) had moderately favorable perception towards the use of ICTs in agricultural extension.

#### Effectiveness of *Kisan Suvidha* mobile application

The results of study clearly indicated that use of social media app *viz.*, *Kisan Suvidha* app leads to significant gain in knowledge among farmers. More than 2/3<sup>rd</sup> (66%) of the respondents opined medium level of knowledge gain through use of this app, followed by 22% with high knowledge gain and 12% with low knowledge gain (Table 2).

More than half (52%) of the respondents reported that information received through mobile app had high applicability, while 38% reported medium level of applicability and 10 per cent reported low applicability. Earlier, Sandhu *et al* (2012) reported that agricultural information sent through mobile text message was perceived as comprehensible, useful and timely by 74.6 per cent, 69.3 per cent and 64.6 per cent of the respondents, respectively.

### CONCLUSION

The *Kisan Suvidha* app. was developed for transfer of quick, timely & need based appropriate information regarding agriculture and allied sectors. It was found that about one fourth (28%) of the respondents had the opinion that this app. is very useful, while more than half of the respondents (54%) opined that this app has medium level of usefulness. Regarding applicability of the information received through app, it was found that 52 per cent of the respondents reported that information received was applicable in crop production situation, need based, timely and content was readable. Need based information and timeliness was useful *i.e.* 84 per cent, and visibility of the content was 94.00 per cent, regarding social media.

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Received on 31/01/2019      Accepted on 20/03/2019