International Organization of Research & Development (IORD)
ISSN: 2348-0831
Vol 13 Special Issue 02 | 2026

FortInfo: Virtual Study and Adventure of Great Forts

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DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.19539738

ABSTRACT

The FortInfo mobile application is an Android-based platform designed to provide detailed information about the historical forts of Maharashtra. The app includes important forts such as Shivneri Fort, Raigad Fort, Sinhagad Fort, and many others.

The application offers user authentication through a login page, GPS-based location services, and detailed fort information including history, architecture, and significance. The objective of the app is to digitally preserve and promote the rich heritage of Maharashtra while making information easily accessible to tourists, students, and history enthusiasts.

The system is developed using Android OS for the frontend, with a backend database for storing fort details and user data. The app ensures a user-friendly interface, secure login system, and location-based navigation features.

1. INTRODUCTION

Maharashtra is historically known as the "Land of Forts" because it has more than 350 historic forts spread across the Sahyadri mountain ranges and coastal regions. These forts played a crucial role in the rise of the Maratha Empire, especially during the reign of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.

Forts such as Shivneri Fort, the birthplace of Shivaji Maharaj, Raigad Fort, the capital of the Maratha Empire, and Sinhagad Fort are symbols of bravery, strategic military planning, and architectural excellence.

Despite their importance, information about these forts is often scattered across books, websites, and local guides. Tourists and students sometimes find it difficult to access reliable, structured, and location-based information in one place. Additionally, many existing applications focus on general tourism rather than specifically highlighting the historical and cultural importance of Maharashtra's forts.

With the rapid growth of smartphone usage and Android-based applications, there is a need for a dedicated digital platform that provides:

- Accurate historical information
- GPS-based location services
- Structured educational content
- User-friendly access through login and personalized features

The FortInfo Android application was developed to address this gap. The app aims to digitally preserve the heritage of Maharashtra's forts and make historical knowledge easily accessible to students, researchers, tourists, and history enthusiasts. By integrating technology with cultural preservation, FortInfo contributes to promoting tourism, education, and awareness about Maharashtra's rich historical legacy.

1.1 Background of FortInfo

Maharashtra is historically known as the "Land of Forts" because it has more than 350 historic forts spread across the Sahyadri mountain ranges and coastal regions. These forts played a crucial role in the rise of the Maratha Empire, especially during the reign of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.

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Despite their importance, information about these forts is often scattered across books, websites, and local guides. Tourists and students sometimes find it difficult to access reliable, structured, and location-based information in one place. Additionally, many existing applications focus on general tourism rather than specifically highlighting the historical and cultural importance of Maharashtra's forts.

1.2 Problem Statement

In today's digital world, most people prefer to use mobile applications to get information. However, there is no dedicated Android application that provides complete and well-organized information about the forts of Maharashtra in one place. Important forts such as Shivneri Fort, Raigad Fort, and Sinhagad Fort are very

important in history, but their information is scattered across different websites, books, and local sources. This makes it difficult for users to find correct and structured details.

Maharashtra attracts many tourists every year who visit these forts for historical knowledge and trekking. Students also need proper and reliable information about forts for their studies and projects. Due to the lack of a centralized digital platform, both tourists and students face difficulties in accessing accurate and location-based information.

Problems Identified:

- Information is scattered and not available in one place
- No dedicated app only for Maharashtra forts
- Lack of GPS-based location guidance
- No secure login system for users
- Limited structured study material for students
- Tourists face difficulty in understanding historical importance

1.3 Research Objective

 Primary Objective

- To design and develop a user-friendly mobile application that digitally preserves and promotes information about Maharashtra's forts.

 Specific Objectives

1. To Centralize Fort Information
- Create a structured database containing historical, architectural, and geographical details of forts.
2. To Implement Secure User Authentication
- Develop login and registration functionality for secure access and personalized experience.
3. To Integrate Location-Based Services
- Provide GPS-based navigation and map integration for easy access to fort locations.
4. To Enhance Educational Accessibility
- Offer accurate and organized content helpful for students, researchers, and competitive exam preparation.
5. To Promote Cultural Heritage Awareness
- Encourage awareness and appreciation of Maharashtra's historical legacy through digital technology.
6. To Improve User Experience
- Design a simple, responsive, and interactive Android interface for smooth navigation.

1.4 Scope of Study

Study focuses on the design and development of the FortInfo Android application, which provides structured and reliable information about the historic forts of Maharashtra such as Shivneri Fort, Raigad Fort, and Sinhagad Fort. The study includes the implementation of user authentication, database integration, and GPS-based location services to offer detailed historical, architectural, and geographical information in a centralized digital platform. It covers Android application development, user interface design, data storage, and system testing to ensure smooth functionality and user-friendly experience. The geographical scope is limited to forts within Maharashtra, and the application currently supports Android devices with internet connectivity for location-based features.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The development of the FortInfo application is based on the study of existing tourism applications, digital heritage platforms, and research on mobile-based information systems. Various websites and mobile applications provide general tourism information about historical monuments in India. However, most of them focus broadly on tourism rather than specifically on the forts of Maharashtra.

Applications like Incredible India provide information about major tourist attractions across the country but lack detailed, structured, and dedicated content for Maharashtra forts. Similarly, mapping platforms such as Google Maps offer location and navigation services but do not provide in-depth historical or educational information about forts like Raigad Fort or Shivneri Fort.

Research studies on digital heritage preservation suggest that mobile applications can significantly improve user engagement, accessibility, and awareness of historical monuments. Many academic papers highlight the importance of integrating GPS-based services, structured databases, and user authentication systems to enhance the overall user experience.

However, after reviewing existing systems, the following gaps were identified:

- No dedicated Android app focused only on Maharashtra forts
- Lack of centralized and structured historical content
- Limited educational orientation for students
- Absence of personalized login-based features in most tourism apps

- No integrated system combining fort history, images, and real-time location services in one platform

Based on this review, the FortInfo application is proposed as a specialized Android-based solution that integrates authentication, GPS tracking, and a comprehensive fort database to provide accurate, organized, and educational information about Maharashtra's forts.

3. METHODOLOGY

The development of the FortInfo application follows a systematic and structured approach to ensure efficient design, implementation, and testing of the system. The methodology adopted for this project is based on the Software Development Life Cycle (SDLC).

Initially, the requirement analysis phase was conducted to identify user needs such as login functionality, fort information display, and GPS-based location services. Information about major forts like Shivneri Fort, Raigad Fort, and Sinhagad Fort was collected from reliable sources including books, research articles, and official tourism websites.

In the system design phase, the application architecture was planned using a three-tier structure consisting of the presentation layer (Android UI), application layer (business logic), and database layer (data storage). Database tables were designed to store fort details, images, location coordinates, and user login information.

3.1 Development Approach

The development of the FortInfo application follows a structured and incremental approach based on the Software Development Life Cycle (SDLC). The project is designed and implemented in phases to ensure proper planning, execution, and testing.

Initially, the Requirement Gathering Phase was conducted to identify user needs such as secure login, structured fort information, and GPS-based location services. Data related to important forts like Shivneri Fort, Raigad Fort, and Sinhagad Fort was collected from reliable historical and tourism sources.

Next, in the System Design Phase, the overall architecture of the application was planned. A three-tier architecture was adopted consisting of:

- Presentation Layer (Android UI using XML layouts)
- Application Layer (Java-based business logic)
- Database Layer (MySQL/Firebase for data storage)

During the Implementation Phase, the frontend was developed using Android Studio, and backend logic was coded in Java. The login system, database connectivity, and GPS-based map integration were implemented step-by-step.

In the Testing Phase, unit testing and functional testing were performed to verify the correctness of login authentication, data retrieval, and location services. Errors and bugs were identified and resolved.

3.2 Implementation Module

1. User Authentication Module

This module manages user registration and login functionality.

Features:

- User registration with email and password
- Secure login validation
- Session management
- Logout functionality

User details are stored securely in the database and validated during login.

2. Fort Information Module

This is the core module of the application. It stores and displays detailed information about major forts of Maharashtra such as Shivneri Fort, Raigad Fort, and Sinhagad Fort.

Features:

- Fort name
- Historical background
- Architectural details
- Importance in Maratha history
- Image display

The data is retrieved from the database and shown in a structured format.

3. Location Module

This module integrates GPS and map services to help users find fort locations.

Features:

- Display fort location on map
- Show user's current location
- Distance calculation

- Navigation support

4. Search and Navigation Module
   This module improves user experience by enabling easy access to information.
   Features:

- Search fort by name
- Filter forts by district
- Smooth navigation between screens

5. Database Management Module
   This module handles data storage and retrieval.
   Stores:

- Fort details
- Images
- Latitude and longitude
- User login credentials

3.3 System Testing

1. Unit Testing
   Each individual module of the application was tested separately to verify its functionality.

- The login and registration module was tested to ensure proper validation of user credentials.
- The fort information module was tested to confirm accurate display of details for forts such as Shivneri Fort and Raigad Fort.
- The location module was tested to verify correct GPS tracking and map integration.

2. Integration Testing
   After unit testing, all modules were integrated and tested together. This ensured smooth communication between:

- Login system and database
- Database and fort information display
- Location services and map interface
  The system was checked to confirm that data flows correctly between frontend and backend.

3. Functional Testing
   Functional testing was performed to ensure that all features work according to requirements:

- Successful user registration and login
- Proper display of fort details
- Correct navigation between screens
- Accurate location tracking

4. Usability Testing
   The application was tested for user-friendliness and ease of navigation. The interface was evaluated to ensure it is simple, clear, and responsive on Android devices.
5. Performance Testing
   The app was tested on different Android devices to check loading speed, responsiveness, and smooth functioning without crashes or errors.

4. CONCLUSION

The FortInfo application was successfully designed and developed as an Android-based mobile platform to provide structured, reliable, and location-based information about the historic forts of Maharashtra. The app includes major forts such as Shivneri Fort, Raigad Fort, and Sinhagad Fort, offering detailed historical, architectural, and geographical information in a centralized digital format.

The project successfully integrates user authentication, database management, and GPS-based location services to enhance user experience. Through proper system design, implementation, and testing, the application meets its objective of promoting digital heritage preservation and improving access to historical knowledge.

FortInfo serves as an educational and tourism-support tool for students, researchers, trekkers, and history enthusiasts. It demonstrates how modern mobile technology can be effectively used to preserve cultural heritage and make historical information easily accessible.

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to Prof. S. G. Lod Mam for her continuous guidance, encouragement, and valuable suggestions throughout the development of the FortInfo App. Her support and supervision played an important role in the successful completion of this research work. The team also thanks the department and institution for providing the necessary resources and technical support required for implementing and testing the project.

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