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Knowledge level of farmers regarding improved cultivation practices of pomegranate crop in Chitradurga district of Karnataka

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Abstract
Pomegranate is an important fruit of tropical and subtropical regions of India. The wide adaptability, hardy nature, low maintenance cost, steady and high yields, fine table purpose better keeping quality, and plants go through rest period when there is scarcity of irrigation water. The technologies vary from farmer to farmer according to their personal and socio-economic characteristics, perceived training needs, availability of factors of production and the problems in adoption of improved cultivation practices of pomegranate Therefore, an appropriate understanding of Knowledge level of improved cultivation practices and the constraints analysis would help to arrive at appropriate extension and research strategies to increase their knowledge level. Keeping this in view a study was conducted to know the knowledge level of improved cultivation practices of pomegranate growers in chitradurga district, Karnataka. A survey was conducted by interview method from pomegranate growers to elicit information regarding knowledge level of improved cultivation practices of pomegranate. It was revealed that majority of the respondents (55.83%) had medium knowledge level about the improved cultivation practices of pomegranate. The variables such as education, farming experience, mass media participation, innovative proneness, had highly positive and significant relationship with knowledge level of the respondents at 0.01% level of significance. Variable land holding had positive and significant relationship with knowledge at 0.05% level of significance. Age had negatively significant relationship with the knowledge level of pomegranate growers.

Keywords: Pomegranate, knowledge level, improved cultivation practices

Introduction
Pomegranate (*Punica granatum)* is a fruit bearing deciduous shrub belongs to the family Lythraceace that grows between 5 and 10m it is a non-climacteric fruit and one of the drought resistant horticultural crops, has proved to be the best profitable crop under dry land conditions. The wide adaptability, hardy nature, low maintenance cost, steady and high yields, fine table purpose better keeping quality, and plants go through rest period when there is scarcity of irrigation water. These are some of the qualities which make this fruit crop ideally suitable for semiarid and arid regions. Pomegranates are cultivated on commercial scale in Chitradurga district. It is the major Pomegranate growing district in South Karnataka. It ranks fourth in the state with respect to total area under pomegranate. Pomegranate being a dry land Horticultural crop is gradually becoming popular with the farmers of the region. These reasons led to the choice of Chitradurga district as the area of study. It is important to know the farmers knowledge level of improved cultivation practices of pomegranate. Lack of extension contacts is the major constraints in that region so the knowledge level regarding recommended improved cultivation practices is medium to low level. So in order to increase their knowledge level Extension department should make integrated extension efforts (trainings, demonstrations, field days, literatures etc.) to provide the required technical knowledge about improved cultivation practices of pomegranate growers. Up scaling the training regarding recommended improved cultivation practices, field visit, crop seminar, are the suggestions got from the respondent's through this research. So, to know the knowledge level, a study entitled ''Knowledge level of farmers regarding improved cultivation practices of pomegranate cultivation in Chitradurga district of Karnataka'' has been conducted.

Research Methodology
The present study was undertaken in Challakere taluk of Chitradurga district, Karnataka. A Pre-structured interview schedule was administered on 120 Pomegranate growers to gather the general and specific information, highlighting on the Knowledge level of Improved cultivation practices of pomegranate crop. The data was further analyzed and tabulated by calculating frequency, percentage and Correlation.

Results and Discussion

The results obtained of the present study and relevant discussion have been presented under following heads:

Table 1: Socio-economic status of respondents

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Young age (20-35 years)	34	28.33
	Middle age (36-50 years)	70	58.33
	Old age (>50 years)	16	13.34
Education	Illiterate	29	2416
	Primary school (1st to 7th)	41	34.16
	High school (8th-10th)	35	29.16
	Intermediate	10	8.3
	Graduate and above	5	4.22
Land holding	Small size (1-3) acre	37	30.83
	Semi medium (3-5) acre	55	45.83
	Medium size (5-8) acre	22	18.34
	Large size (above 10) acre	6	5.00
Farming experience	Low (1-10) years	34	28.33
	Medium (10-20) years	73	60.83
	High (>20 years)	13	10.84
Annual income	Low (1-3 Lakh)	38	31.66
	Medium (3.1-6 Lakh)	52	43.33
	High (Above 6 lakhs)	30	25.00
Mass media exposure	Low (0-0.96)	38	31.66
	Medium (0.97-2.19)	64	53.34
	High (2.20-3.41)	18	15.00
Innovativeness	Low (0-1.66)	53	44.16
	Medium (1.67-3.32)	48	40.00
	High (3.33-4.98)	19	15.83

table 1 indicates that majority (58.33%) respondents belong to middle age group i.e. (36-50) years. About 34.16 per cent had education up to primary school, about 45.83 per cent were having medium size of land holding. Majority of the respondents (60.83%) had medium farming experience About 43.33 per cent respondents had (3.1-6) lakh annual income, Majority of the respondents had medium level of mass media exposure (53.33%) About 44.16 per cent respondents had low level innovativeness.

Table 2: Level of knowledge of the respondents regarding improved cultivation practices of pomegranate crop

Level	Frequency	Percentages
Lowest level (37-43)	25	20.84
Medium level (44-50)	67	55.83
High level (51-57)	28	23.33
Total	120	100.00
Mean = 47.31 SD = 4.00		

Above table 2 indicates that about Majority (55.83%) respondents have medium level knowledge regarding improved pomegranate practices followed by 23.33 per cent high level knowledge and 20.84 per cent low level knowledge respectively. Similar finding is also reported by Sontakke Dipak Ukandrao (2017) [4].

Table 3: Relationship between characteristics of farmers with knowledge level

Sl. No.	Independent variables	'r' value
1.	Age	-0.226**
2.	Education	0.279**
3.	Farming experience	0.333**
4.	Land holding	0.151*
5.	Annual income	0.224**
6.	Mass media participation	0.234**
7.	Innovative proneness	0.384**

* = Significant at 0.05 % level

**= Significant at 0.01 % level

In the above table 3 reveals that the variables such as education, farming experience, mass media participation, innovative proneness, had highly positive and significant relationship with knowledge level of the respondents at 0.01% level of significance. Variable land holding had positive and significant relationship with knowledge at 0.05% level of significance. Age had negatively significant relationship with the knowledge level of pomegranate growers.

Discussion

In this study the socio-economic status and knowledge level were analysed by collecting data it reveals that more than half of the pomegranate growers (58.33%) were middle aged. Usually, farmers of middle aged are enthusiastic having more responsibility and are more efficient than the younger and older ones. Further, respondents between 36 to 50 years of age group have more physical vigour and also more responsibility towards family than the younger ones. Maximum 34.16 per cent respondents were having education up to primary level because majority of them were forced to do farming in young age and also due to lack of interest in education. 45.83 per cent were having medium size of land holding. Farming experience mainly depends upon age of the farmer. A majority of pomegranate growers (60.83%) belonged to middle age category and they might have started farming in their early age itself. So, majority of respondents had medium farming experience. 43.33 per cent of the respondent's income was in between Rs 3.1 lakh- 6 lakhs the possible reason that could be attributed for their better socio-economic condition may be due to majority of the respondents were having medium land holding, which enabled them to generate more income. 44.16 per cent respondents have low level innovativeness, as majority of the respondents were having education level up to primary school this is the reason that they have majority of them having low innovativeness. Majority of the pomegranate growers (55.83%) fell under medium knowledge level category. The positive and highly significant relationship of personal characteristics such as education, mass media participation, farming experience and innovative proneness with the knowledge level clearly indicates the medium knowledge level trend.

Conclusion

It is concluded that majority of the respondents were middle aged people and majority of them were had education up to primary level and majority of them were had medium level of farming experience, risk orientation, market orientation, economic orientation, mass media exposure and majority of them were having low level of extension contact, innovativeness, scientific orientation. Education, farming experience, mass media participation, innovative proneness, had highly positive and significant relationship with knowledge level of the respondents. Variable land holding had positive and significant relationship with knowledge level. Age had negatively significant relationship with the knowledge level of pomegranate growers. Majority of them had medium level of knowledge regarding improved cultivation practices of pomegranate crop. So in order to increase their knowledge level, Extension dept. should make integrated extension efforts (trainings, demonstrations, field days, literatures etc.) to provide the required technical knowledge about improved cultivation practices of pomegranate growers. The future prospects are Study of possibilities of export marketing for pomegranate. Capacity

Building programmes for pomegranate growers. Study on integrated pomegranate based farming system for sustainable agriculture. Development of suitable marketing strategies for pomegranate growers. This study was conducted within the time and resource limitations of a student researcher. But there is further scope for serve and action research in this field.

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