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Attitude of grape growers towards good agricultural practices

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Abstract

The present study was conducted in Ausa and Nilanga tehsils of Latur district and Dharashiv and Tuljapur tehsils of Dharashiv district were selected purposively from Marathwada region of Maharashtra State. From each selected tehsil three villages were selected purposively. Total twelve villages were selected for research study. Ten farmers were selected from each village and hence 120 respondents were selected for the study. The study was based on an ex-post facto research design. The study indicated that the majority of the grape growers had a medium level of attitude towards good agricultural practices. Overall, the findings indicated that the majority of grape growers had a favourable attitude (66.67%) towards good agricultural practices, followed by grape growers with a highly favourable attitude (18.33%), whereas 15.00 per cent had an unfavourable attitude, suggesting satisfactory adoption of good agricultural practices.

The study identified several challenges encountered by grape growers in adoption of good agricultural practices. Major constraints faced by grape growers were climate variability and pest and disease incidence (91.66%), followed by fear of rejection of produce due to strict standards (75.83%), lack of government support or subsidy (74.17%). These constraints indicate the need for strengthening weather-based advisory services and promoting Integrated Pest Management (IPM), followed by simplifying the GAP certification process and reducing documentation requirements, providing financial assistance and subsidies to reduce the cost of good agricultural practices implementation.

Keywords: Grape growers, good agricultural practices, GAP, attitude, climate variability, pest and disease incidence

Introduction

Agriculture is an important sector of the Indian economy, providing livelihood, food and employment to a large rural population. With increasing emphasis on food safety, environmental protection and sustainable production, good agricultural practices have become important for producing safe, quality and sustainable agricultural products. Grapes (*Vitis vinifera* L.) are an important commercial fruit crop, consumed fresh and processed into raisins, juice, wine and other value-added products. India is among the major grape-producing countries, with Maharashtra being the leading grape-producing state. Nashik is a major grape-growing district, while Sangli, Solapur, Pune, Ahilyanagar, Latur and Dharashiv also contribute to grape production.

Good Agricultural Practices involve appropriate soil and nutrient management, efficient irrigation, integrated pest and disease management, safe and judicious pesticide use, hygienic harvesting and post-harvest handling, worker safety and proper record keeping. These practices help improve fruit quality, reduce harmful chemical residues, ensure efficient use of natural resources and facilitate access to domestic and international markets. India has also emerged as an important exporter of fresh table grapes, particularly to European and Gulf markets, making compliance with quality and food-safety requirements increasingly important.

According to FAO (2003), good agricultural practices

address environmental, economic and social sustainability in farm processes and result in safe and quality agricultural products. However, their effective implementation depends largely on farmers' knowledge, awareness, perception and attitude towards recommended practices. Therefore, understanding the attitude of grape growers towards good agricultural practices is essential for developing appropriate extension strategies, training programmes and policy support. Hence, the present study was undertaken to assess the attitude of grape growers towards good agricultural practices and the factors influencing their attitude.

Objective

1. To assess attitude of grape growers towards good agricultural practices.
2. To identify the constraints faced by the grape growers while adoption of good agricultural practices.

Materials and Methods

The present study was carried out in the Latur and Dharashiv districts of Maharashtra State. From each selected district two tehsils were selected, from Latur district Ausa and Nilanga and from Dharashiv district, Dharashiv and Tuljapur were selected purposively. From each selected tehsil three villages were selected purposively. Thus, total twelve villages were selected from four tehsils for the study. From each selected

village, ten farmers were selected randomly. Thus, 120 grape growers were selected for the study. The research design followed for the study was Ex-post facto research design. The collected data were analysed using frequency, percentage, arithmetic mean and standard deviation.

Attitude of grape growers towards good agricultural practices was operationally defined as the degree of favourable or unfavourable disposition of grape growers towards good agricultural practices. The attitude was measured using a structured attitude scale consisting of favourable and unfavourable statements related to the usefulness, benefits, affordability, reliability, operation and overall acceptance of good agricultural practices. The responses were obtained on a five-point continuum viz., strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree, with scores of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1, respectively, for favourable statements. For unfavourable statements, the scoring was reversed as 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, respectively.

The scores obtained for all the statements were summed to obtain the overall attitude score of each farmer. A higher score indicated a more favourable attitude towards good agricultural practices, while a lower score indicated an unfavourable attitude. Based on the total attitude scores, the

respondents were categorized into unfavourable, favourable and highly favourable attitude groups using the Mean $\pm$ Standard Deviation method. Frequency and percentage were calculated for each category to assess the attitude of grape growers towards good agricultural practices.

Results and Discussion

1. Attitude of grape growers towards good agricultural practices

Attitude refers to the degree of favourable or unfavourable disposition of an individual towards a particular object, practice, idea or technology. In the present study, the attitude of grape growers towards good agricultural practices was operationally considered as the extent to which growers expressed favourable or unfavourable feelings and views towards the recommended practices followed in grape production. It included their perceptions regarding the usefulness, feasibility, economic benefits, food safety, quality improvement and environmental sustainability of good agricultural practices. A favourable attitude is expected to encourage the proper adoption and implementation of good agricultural practices, while an unfavourable attitude may act as a barrier to their effective implementation.

Table 1: Distribution of the grape growers according to their attitude towards good agricultural practices

SL. No.	Statements	SA Freq. (%)	A Freq. (%)	UD Freq. (%)	DA Freq. (%)	SDA Freq. (%)
1.	Global Gap certification of grapes gives more income by export of grapes (+)	86 (71.66)	34 (28.33)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)
2.	Adoption of good Agricultural practices in grape cultivation help farmers to get a higher price for their produce (+)	81 (67.50)	39 (32.50)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)
3.	Good agricultural practices Leads to overall empowerment of grape growers (+)	105 (87.50)	12 (10.00)	03 (02.50)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)
4.	Good agricultural practices improves the efficiency of your farm management (+)	103 (85.83)	14 (11.67)	03 (02.50)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)
5.	Adoption of good Agricultural practices is Nothing but wastage of money (-)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)	19 (15.83)	101 (84.17)
6.	Farmers following good Agricultural practices are considered as progressive and respectable in the village(+)	54 (45.00)	43 (35.83)	15 (12.50)	08 (06.67)	00 (00.00)
7.	Farmers adopting good agricultural practices get easy market access (+)	46 (38.33)	51 (42.50)	17 (14.17)	06 (05.00)	00 (00.00)
8.	Training and workshops on good agricultural practices are organized by the government (+)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)	26 (21.67)	94 (78.30)	00 (00.00)
9.	Good agricultural practices standards and practices are very difficult to follow (-)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)	26 (21.67)	94 (78.33)	00 (00.00)
10.	There is good scope for good Agricultural practices adoption among grape growers (+)	54 (45.00)	49 (40.83)	17 (14.17)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)
11.	Export of grapes contributes to national progress (+)	50 (41.67)	49 (40.83)	20 (16.67)	01 (00.83)	00 (00.00)
12.	Good agricultural practices is suitable only for literate farmers (-)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)	02 (01.67)	34 (28.33)	84 (70.00)
13.	Procedure of adopting good agricultural practices is simple (+)	26 (21.67)	34 (28.33)	21 (17.50)	39 (32.50)	00 (00.00)
14.	Information about good agricultural practices is not easily available (-)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)	02 (01.67)	41 (34.17)	77 (64.17)
15.	Good agricultural practices ensures food safety for consumers (+)	76 (63.33)	42 (35.00)	02 (01.67)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)
16.	There is bias in the implementation of good agricultural practices (-)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)	05 (04.17)	115 (95.83)

The data presented in the table 1 indicated that, 71.67 per cent of the respondents strongly agreed and 28.33 per cent agreed that Global GAP certification provides higher income

through grape export. Similarly, 67.50 per cent strongly agreed and 32.50 per cent agreed that adoption of good agricultural practices helps farmers obtain higher prices for

their produce.

A majority of the respondents (87.50%) strongly agreed that good agricultural practices lead to the overall empowerment of grape growers, while 85.83 per cent strongly agreed that good agricultural practices improve farm management efficiency.

Most of the respondents (84.17%) strongly disagreed with the statement that adoption of good agricultural practices is nothing but a waste of money. Further, 45.00 per cent strongly agreed and 35.83 per cent agreed that farmers following good agricultural practices are considered progressive and respectable in the village. Likewise, 42.50 per cent agreed and 38.33 per cent strongly agreed that farmers adopting good agricultural practices get easy market access.

The majority of the respondents (78.33%) disagreed that training and workshops on good agricultural practices are organized by the government and also disagreed that good agricultural practices standards and practices are very difficult to follow. Further, 45.00 per cent strongly agreed and 40.83 per cent agreed that there is good scope for good agricultural practices adoption among grape growers, while 41.67 per cent strongly agreed and 40.83 per cent agreed that grape exports contribute to national progress.

Most respondents (70.00%) strongly disagreed that good agricultural practices are suitable only for literate farmers. Regarding the simplicity of the good agricultural practices adoption procedure, 32.50 per cent disagreed, 28.33 per cent agreed, 21.67 per cent strongly agreed, and 17.50 per cent remained undecided, indicating mixed opinions. Furthermore, 64.17 per cent strongly disagreed that information on good agricultural practices is not easily available, 63.33 per cent strongly agreed that good agricultural practices ensure food safety for consumers, and

95.83 per cent strongly disagreed that there is bias in the implementation of good agricultural practices. Overall, the findings indicate that the respondents possessed a highly favourable attitude towards good agricultural practices in grape cultivation.

Table 2: Distribution of the grape growers according to their overall attitude towards good agricultural practices

SL. No.	Category	N = 120	
		Frequency	Percentage
1.	Unfavourable (up to 46)	18	15.00
2.	Favourable (47 to 58)	80	66.67
3.	Highly Favourable (above 58)	22	18.33
	Total	120	100.00

The data presented in Table 2 revealed that, two-third (66.67%) of the grape growers had a Favourable attitude towards good agricultural practices, followed by 18.33% with a Highly Favourable and 15.00% with a Unfavourable attitude.

2. Constraints faced by the grape growers while adoption of good agricultural practices

Constraints faced by grape growers refer to the difficulties and obstacles experienced by grape growers while adopting and implementing good agricultural practices in grape production. In the present study, constraints were considered in terms of financial, technical, knowledge, labour, certification, infrastructural, marketing and institutional difficulties that hinder the effective adoption of good agricultural practices. The constraints reported by the grape growers were assessed based on their frequency and percentage to identify the major difficulties encountered in adopting good agricultural practices.

Table 3: Constraints faced by the grape growers in adoption of good agricultural practices

Sl. No.	Constraints	Yes Freq.	Yes%	No Freq.	No%	Rank
1.	High cost of GAP implementation	79	65.83	41	34.17	VI
2.	Climate variability and pest and disease incidence	110	91.66	10	08.33	I
3.	Fear of rejection of produce due to strict standards	91	75.83	29	24.17	II
4.	Complex and time-consuming certification procedure	84	70.00	36	30.00	IV
5.	Difficulty in understanding good agricultural practices standards	80	66.67	40	33.33	V
6.	Lack of government support or subsidy	89	74.17	31	25.83	III

The findings indicated that, 91.66 per cent of the grape growers perceived climate variability and pest and disease incidence as a major constraint in the adoption of good agricultural practices. This was followed by 75.83 per cent who reported fear of rejection of produce due to strict standards, 74.17 per cent who faced lack of government support or subsidy, 70.00 per cent who experienced complex and time-consuming certification procedures, 66.67 per cent who had difficulty in understanding good agricultural practices standards, and 65.83 per cent who considered the high cost of good agricultural practices implementation as a major constraint.

Conclusion

The study concluded that the majority of grape growers had a favourable attitude towards good agricultural practices, followed by those with highly favourable and unfavourable

attitude. Overall, the findings indicated that grape growers had a favourable orientation towards good agricultural practices and recognized their importance in ensuring quality, safe and sustainable grape production.

The study further concluded that grape growers encountered several constraints in adopting good agricultural practices, high implementation cost, climate variability and pest and disease incidence, fear of produce rejection, complex certification procedures, difficulty in understanding GAP standards, and lack of government support or subsidies for effective adoption of good agricultural practices among grape growers.

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