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Relationship of Profile Characteristics of Entrepreneurs with Knowledge Levels of Vermicompost Technology

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ABSTRACT

The study revealed that majority of the vermicompost entrepreneurs possessed medium level of Knowledge (63.33%) followed by equal number of respondents i.e., high (18.33%) and low (18.33%) levels. The relationship between profile characteristics and Knowledge of vermicompost entrepreneurs observed that computed 'r' value of education, occupation, experience in vermicompost preparation, training received, economic orientation, market orientation, innovativeness, risk orientation and achievement motivation were positively significant at 0.01 level of probability, while age, land holding, family size and social participation were non-significant with the Knowledge of vermicompost entrepreneurs. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis inferred that selected independent variables put together contributed 84.02 per cent of the total variation in the Knowledge of vermicompost entrepreneurs.

Key words : Entrepreneur**,** Knowledge, Profile, Relationship, Vermicompost.

Entrepreneurship is a dynamic process of creating incremental wealth. This wealth is created by individuals who take the major risks in terms of equity, time and/or career commitment of providing value for some product or services. The product or service itself may or may not be new or unique but value must somehow be infused by the entrepreneur by securing and allocating the necessary skills and resources. In other words, it is the application of energy for initiating and building an enterprise. Entrepreneur in small scale is the only solution to the problems of unemployment, proper utilization of human and non human resources and improving the living conditions of poor masses.

Hence, the present study was undertaken with an objective to find out the relationship of profile characteristics of vermicompost entrepreneurs with their Knowledge in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Guntur district purposively because it has more number of vermicompost units in Andhra Pradesh. Out of 57 mandals in Guntur district, twenty seven mandals were selected randomly for the study. A total number of 60 vermicompost entrepreneurs were selected randomly. An Ex-post facto research was followed and data was collected from the respondents through a well structured and pre-tested interview schedule. Collected data was analysed by using suitable statistical tools and necessary inferences were drawn.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It was clear from the table 1, that majority (63.33%) of the vermicompost entrepreneurs had the medium level of knowledge followed by equal per cent (18.33%) of low and high levels of knowledge. The plausible reason might be due to the fact that the government officials did not show much interest in educating the respondents Regarding the recommended practices of vermicompost technology. The officials appear to have simply distributed the earthworms and required materials for entrepreneurs without adequate technical guidance. The other reasons for medium Knowledge might be higher education, medium economic orientation and innovativeness. The results were in agreement with the findings of Meena *et al.,* (2009).

It was evident from the Table 2 that computed 'r' values of education, occupation, experience in vermicompost preparation, training received, economic orientation, market orientation, innovativeness, risk orientation and achievement motivation were positively significant at 0.01 per cent level of probability with Knowledge of vermicompost entrepreneurs. The variables age, land holding, family size and social participation were Non-significant with Knowledge of vermicompost entrepreneurs.

From the table 2, it was clear that there was positive and non-significant relationship between age and Knowledge of vermicompost entrepreneurs. This inferred that farmers of different age groups had similar knowledge level regarding recommended vermicompost practices. The relationship might be because farmers of different age have understood the important practices required. This might have helped majority of farmers to know about the practices at similar level. This result was in agreement with the findings of Naik *et al*., (2009) and Saha *et al.,* (2010).

The results from the Table 2 indicated that education and knowledge were positively and significantly related. This may be because of the opportunity to vermicompost entrepreneurs to get exposure to literature on the enterprises and change in receptive levels of new ideas since they have trained their mental abilities to remember and recall the ideas better. Educated entrepreneurs will have more information seeking behaviour. Higher educational status might help them to gain more knowledge on the recommended practices of vermicompost technology. Similar trend was reported by Naik *et al.,* (2009) and Harish and Manjunatha (2011).

The respondents who had more farming and service occupation might have perceived more knowledge of recommended practices of vermicompost technology. This might be the reason for positive and significant relationship between Occupation and Knowledge of vermicompost entrepreneurs. This finding was in tune with the findings reported by Raju and Murthy (2002).

Perusal of the Table 2 revealed that there was positive and non-significant relationship between land holding and knowledge of vermicompost entrepreneurs. This might be due to the fact that the entrepreneurs with different land holdings had similar knowledge level regarding recommended practices. Irrespective of land holdings farmers tend to have knowledge about vermicompost practices. Use of this practice is relatively old and has been used over a period of years in traditional farming. The information was passed on from generations about its usefulness, hence irrespective of their land holdings, entrepreneurs were aware and had knowledge of these practices. This result was in line with the results of Naik *et al.,* (2009) and Harish and Manjunatha (2011).

It was evident from the Table 2, that there was positive and significant relationship between experience in vermicompost preparation and knowledge of vermicompost entrepreneurs. It is obvious that experienced entrepreneur will have more knowledge because of continuous involvement, trainings and extension contact etc. This result was in conformity with the results of Balasubramani *et al.,* (2005) and Saha *et al.,* (2010).

It was inferred from the table 2, that there was negative and non-significant relationship between family size and knowledge of vermicompost entrepreneurs. It implied that there was no increase or decrease of family sizes. The entrepreneurs of the study area were high innovativeness and achievement motivation with their knowledge but not the family size. This finding was in concurrence with that of Srilatha and Vani (2006).

It could be seen from the table 2 that there was positive and significant relationship between training received and knowledge of vermicompost entrepreneurs. This might be due to the fact that the entrepreneurs attended training programmes which imparted knowledge and skill to the entrepreneurs on recommended practices of vermicompost technology and helped in reaping higher profits. This trend was also noticed by Balasubramani *et al.,* (2005).

The results furnished in the table 2, indicated that there was negative and non-significant relationship between social participation and knowledge of vermicompost entrepreneurs. It might be due to the reason that more or less participation of entrepreneurs, it has not have any

Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to their Knowledge.

(n=60)

S.No.	Category	Respondents	
		Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low (<28.42)	11	18.33
2.	Medium (28.42-34.81)	38	63.33
3.	High (>34.81)	11	18.33
	Mean=31.6		SD=3.19

Table 2. Correlation coefficient between profile characteristics and Knowledge level of vermicompost entrepreneurs.

(n=60)

S.No.	Independent variables	'r' values
1	Age	0.101NS
2	Education	0.729**
3	Occupation	0.648**
4	Land holding	0.171NS
5	Experience in vermicompost preparation	0.595**
6	Family size	-0.157NS
7	Training received	0.658**
8	Social participation	-0.062NS
9	Economic orientation	0.612**
10	Market orientation	0.670**
11	Innovativeness	0.659**
12	Risk orientation	0.676**
13	Achievement motivation	0.649**

** Significant at 0.01 level of probability NS - Non-significant

influence on their knowledge levels. Though we assume high participation naturally leads to increased knowledge, it may not be true always, if it is directed towards specific one. Since the recommended practices of vermicompost technology are limited in number and one is likely to know those recommendations in first few participations. Thereafter it would be only repetitions of information. Under these conditions the entrepreneurs with more or less participation would have acquired same information on vermicompost technology and their knowledge levels would have been similar. This finding was similar to the findings of Saha *et al.,* (2010).

Table 2, explains that there was positive and significant relationship between economic orientation and knowledge of vermicompost entrepreneurs. This might be due to the fact that knowledge acquisition being of improve act driven by associated financial benefits. Thus, economic orientation acts as initiating factor for acquiring knowledge about recommended practices. Hence this trend was observed. This finding was in

accordance with the findings of Naik *et al.,* (2009) and Harish and Manjunatha (2011).

The results from the Table 2 indicated that market orientation and knowledge of vermicompost entrepreneurs were positively and significantly related. Market orientation was operationalised as the judgment taken by an individual entrepreneur to sell his produce for better price by analyzing the various prevailing infrastructural and market intelligent. Generally the entrepreneurs oriented towards better market of their product possess high risk taking ability for understanding advanced technologies. This finding was supported by the findings of Raju and Murthy (2002).

Table 2, indicates that there was a positive and significant relationship between innovativeness and knowledge of vermicompost entrepreneur. This trend might be due to the fact that Innovation-Decision process necessarily requires knowledge as the first step for adoption of latest technologies. This implies that higher the level of knowledge more will be the persuasion of the respondents to adopt or reject innovation. The findings of the study were in agreement with the results obtained by Prasad Reddy *et al.,* (2007) and Harish and Manjunatha (2011).

It is clear from the Table 2, that there was a positive and highly significant relationship between risk orientation and knowledge level of vermicompost entrepreneur. Risk orientation is expressed as the degree to which an entrepreneur is oriented to take risk and has courage to face uncertainties in vermicompost technology. Unless the entrepreneur had knowledge on recommended technology he does not take risk in practicing it. This finding of the present study was in conformity with the related findings of Harish and Manjunatha (2011).

It was stated from Table 2, that there was a positive and highly significant relationship between achievement motivation and knowledge level of vermicompost entrepreneur. This thereby shows that greater achievement motivation of the farmer, greater would be the knowledge. It implied that forcing the individual to work constantly towards reaching the goal which they had carved for

Table 3. Multiple regression analysis of profile characteristics and knowledge level of vermicompost entrepreneurs.

(n=60)

S.No.	Independent variables	Regression Coefficient (b_i's)	Standard error	't' value
1	Age	0.028	0.025	1.098NS
2	Education	0.685	0.202	3.376**
3	Occupation	0.124	0.210	0.592NS
4	Land holding	0.244	0.362	0.676NS
5	Experience in vermicompost preparation	0.306	0.379	0.807NS
6	Family size	-0.301	0.498	-0.604NS
7	Training received	0.497	0.337	1.472NS
8	Social participation	-0.004	0.041	-0.119NS
9	Economic orientation	0.030	0.086	0.353NS
10	Market orientation	0.472	0.143	3.298**
11	Innovativeness	0.354	0.169	2.088*
12	Risk orientation	0.036	0.188	0.194NS
13	Achievement motivation	0.136	0.128	1.066NS

R^2 = 0.8402 F=18.61** a =9.85

* Significant at 0.05 level of probability NS - Non-significant

** Significant at 0.01 level of probability

themselves. In this process end up with acquisition of knowledge about recommended practices in vermicompost technology. This would have been predisposing them to set useful and additional information than the low achievers in improving the knowledge over others. The results were in accordance with the findings of Prasad Reddy *et al.,* (2007).

It was observed from the Table 3, that the thirteen independent variables with the Knowledge by the vermicompost entrepreneurs taken on Multiple Linear Regression Analysis gave the R^2 (Co-efficient of multiple determination) value of 0.8402. Hence, it could be inferred that independent variables put together contributed for 84.02 per cent of the total variation in the Knowledge of the vermicompost entrepreneurs, leaving the rest to extraneous effects. The independent variables like education, market orientation of the respondents had contributed significantly at 0.01 level of probability and innovativeness at 0.05 level of probability towards the variation in the Knowledge of the vermicompost entrepreneurs.

It could be concluded from the findings that majority of the vermicompost entrepreneurs possessed medium level of Knowledge followed by equal number of entrepreneurs at high and low levels. Among the selected independent variables education, occupation, experience in vermicompost preparation, training received, economic orientation, market orientation, innovativeness, risk orientation and achievement motivation were positively significant at 0.01 level of probability, while age, land holding, family size and social participation were non-significant with the Knowledge of vermicompost entrepreneurs.

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