

Factors Contributing to Up-Scaling and Limiting the Mushroom Enterprise

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ABSTRACT

Mushroom cultivation is an important agro-based enterprise for the farming community of Odisha. Always we thought that scientific technology can only contribute towards higher production and productivity and on the other hand profitability is the key factor which can encourage the farmer to upscale the enterprise as well as the fellow farmers to accept the enterprise. Sometime even though the production technology is potential enough to achieve higher production, sustainability of the enterprise is highly affected in absence of other ancillary factors. The present study assesses the factors contributing up-scaling and limiting the mushroom enterprise. The study reveals that Market demand has been recognized as the primary factor to predict profitability of the enterprise and un-stable market; marketing net-work, reducing yield potential of spawn, high perishability of the commodity and reducing yield due to continuous cropping are the most important factors for limiting the mushroom enterprise.

Key words: *Up-scaling, Limiting, Mushroom Enterprise*

In Odisha, mushroom cultivation is an important agro-based enterprise for the farming community. The agro-climatic conditions of Odisha are conducive for production of paddy straw during March-October, oyster mushroom from November-February, milky mushroom from March-October and button mushroom during winter seasons. The reason for fast spread of the enterprise could be attributed to certain advantages like better taste, short production period, easy and simple cultivation method, higher profitability and potentiality of the enterprise to provide gainful employment. In spite of many accelerating factors to support for up-scaling the enterprise, the growth and stability has remained limited during recent years.

The primary objectives of any technology dissemination activity are to ensure the adoption and spread of remunerative technology. As a matter of fact scientific technology can only contribute towards higher production and productivity and on the other hand profitability is the key factor which can encourage the farmer to upscale the enterprise as well as the fellow farmers to accept the enterprise. Sometime even though the production technology is potential enough to achieve higher production, sustainability of the enterprise is highly affected in absence of other ancillary factors. Various factors related to profitability of the enterprise influence the continuity of production. Profitability is ensured when there is a definite market demand, low cost of production and high price of the commodity. These entire factors though do not give equal effect but have a definite role in spread of the technology.

In other word, we may say that entrepreneur always keep in his mind to expand his business over a period of time. Accordingly the entrepreneur behaviour of mushroom grower also get influenced by the factors which are responsible for up- scaling the enterprise at individual level, if it is initiated by an individual entrepreneur or, group level if it is initiation through self help groups. In the present study the identified factors which are supposed to be responsible for up-scaling mushroom entrepreneur.

Objectives

1. To assess the socio-personal characteristics of respondents
2. To assess the factors contributing up-scaling the mushroom enterprise.
3. To assess the factors contributing limiting the mushroom enterprise.

METHODOLOGY

This study was derived from Ph.D. thesis entitled "Impact of mushroom enterprise on the livelihood of farm families of Odisha". The study was undertaken in three districts namely Bhadrak, Dhenkanal and Puri of Odisha state of India. A stratified multistage sampling procedure was followed to select the samples for the study. Two blocks from each district, three grampanchayat from each block and 15-20 number of respondents from each panchayat comprising total respondents as 300. The data were collected through a brief interview schedule, personal discussion, observation and Focus Group Discussion. The data were tabulated and analysed with some statistical tools.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-personal characteristics : The study was undertaken by involving the mushroom growers in the study area. Even though all the respondents were involved in the enterprise, they vary with respect to socio economic parameters as indicated in Table below.

Table 1
Socio economic profile

Social parameter	Percentage
Age Group	
Upto 35 years	53.33
36-50 years	40.00
Above 50 years	6.67
Sex	
Male	81
Female	19
Level of education	
Illiterate	0.67
Can read & write	6.33
Upto 7 th	20.67
Upto 10 th	49.00
Upto Graduation	22.00
Above graduation	1.33
Age of enterprise	
Upto 2years	18.67
3 to 5 years	37.67
6 years and above	43.67
Income from the enterprise	
High (>101527.06)	18.33
Medium(40099.6- 101527.06)	50.0
Low (<40099.6)	31.67
*Mean- 70813.33, SD-30713.73	

In the present study the identified factors which are supposed to be responsible for up scaling mushroom entrepreneur are presented in the Table 2.

From Table 2 table, it is clearly inferred that, high market demand is the primary factor which

encourages the farmer to produce more. The gap in the high market demand and low volume of production indicates the scope for expansion of the enterprise. High price of the commodity is the second important factor influencing spread of the technology followed by low cost of production. These factors are supplementary to each other in bringing out a total effect in spread of the enterprise. In the present day situation the most crucial factor in choosing an enterprise is to first assess the market demand. Market demand has been recognized as the primary factor to predict profitability of the enterprise. Once the farmers visualize a demand for their produce, they definitely initiate to up-scaling/ spread the enterprise.

It is not only the market demand but also the price of the commodity that makes an enterprise remunerative. The extent of contribution of high price of the commodity as perceived by the farmers clearly justify the fact that if there is a market demand with capacity to pay high price for the commodity, the cost of production though important becomes least contributing factor in up-scaling the enterprise.

Factors limiting the spread of the enterprise : There is a popular saying “Mushroom grows like Mushroom”. From the initial year of introduction when mushroom is accepted as a backyard activity by the resource poor farm families, it has now being recognized as a potential commercial activity in rural areas. However, the potentiality shown in productivity, profitability and market demand has not been exploited fully. On one hand the enterprise has been spread like anything, on the other hand farmers do express reservation to proceed further. Even if with so many supporting factors accelerating the spread of the enterprise, some of the constraints faced by the farmers limit expansion to the potential level. In the present study attempt was also made to get the farmers perception regarding the extent of contribution of the limiting factor in creating hindrance in spread of the technology.

Table 2
Factors contributing to up-scaling the enterprise

(N=300)

Sl. No	Reasons	Score	Mean Value	+/- than average	Rank
1	High yielding from the crop	21074	70.24	-	III
2	High market demand	23854	79.51	+	I
3	Low cost of production	19739	65.79	-	IV
4	High price of the commodity	26383	78.94	+	II

Average Mean Score -73.62

Table 3
Factors limiting the spread of enterprise

(N=300)

Sl. No	Reasons	Mean Value	+/- than average	Rank
1	Yield fluctuation due to climatic fluctuation	50.93	-	VIII
2	Reducing yield due to continuous cropping	57.17	+	V
3	Un expected contamination	35.48	-	XI
4	Fluctuation in yield from different beds under same situation	49.06	-	IX
5	Reducing yield potential of spawn	62.88	+	III
6	High perishability of the commodity	59.89	+	IV
7	Un-stable market	76.56	+	I
8	Lack of cold chain	52.06	-	VII
9	Marketing net-work	68.03	+	II
10	Lack of post production and value addition facility.	54.25	-	VI
11	Lack of export potentialities	43.05	-	X

Average Mean Score- 55.35

The data presented in Table-3 indicate that market orientation has been considered to be the primary concern of the farmer in spread of the technology. Even though high market demand, has been identified as most crucial factor in spread of the technology, on the contrary unstable market has been identified as to be most crucial as perceived by the farmers in limiting the spread of the technology. Lack of appropriate marketing network has been perceived as second important factor in limiting the spread. These two factors are most important in absence of which the proper marketing activity cannot take place. The yield potential of the spawn is reducing and has been recognized as the 3rd important factor which limits the spread of the enterprise. Because with the spread of the enterprise over a period of years, the demand for spawn is increasing everyday and to meet the demand, the number of spawn unit both private and government have not been increased to that extent. With limited capacity, the spawn producers are striving hard to meet the demand of the grower and thereby not in a position to maintain the quality potential of the spawn. Even though the factors limit the spread of technology on one hand, on the other provide scope for expansion of spawn production unit in the state. The factors like high perishability of the commodity, reducing yield due to continuous cropping are also important one for limiting the spread of the enterprise. Lack of post production and value addition activity, lack of cold

chain, fluctuation in yield from different beds due to climatic fluctuation, yield fluctuation from different beds in the same situation, lack of export potential and expected contamination were perceived in the descending order of the importance. Because of continuous cropping yield is gradually reducing, which has become a potential threat for spread of the enterprise.

High perishability of the commodity increases the wastage of the produce in the process of transportation and delay in sale. On the other hand there is no sufficient provision for maintaining cold chain during storage and transportation of the produce. The reason like un-predictable differential yield in different beds under the same situation, lack of export potential and un-expected contamination though important are not very well appreciated for the purpose and have been placed at lowest order of preference.

CONCLUSION

The study conclude that, in the present day situation the most crucial factor in choosing an enterprise is to first assess the market demand. Market demand has been recognized as the primary factor to predict profitability of the enterprise. Once the farmers visualize a demand for their produce, they definitely initiate to up-scaling/spread the enterprise. The extent of contribution of high price of the commodity as perceived by the farmers clearly justify the fact that, if

there is a market demand with capacity to pay high price for the commodity, then the cost of production will be overshadowed. Market orientation has been considered to be the primary concern of the farmer in spread of the technology. Even though high market demand, has been identified as most crucial factor in spread of the technology, on the contrary unstable market has been identified as to be most crucial as perceived by the farmers in limiting the spread of the technology. Lack of appropriate marketing network has been perceived as second important factor in limiting the spread of enterprise. Further high perishability of the commodity, low yield due to continuous cropping are also other important factor in limiting the spread of the enterprise.

Therefore Govt as well as mushroom grower federations should take initiation for development of marketing network in different district, establishment of more no. of spawn production unit for quality spawn production, rejecting the spawn production unit those which are supplying poor quality spawn and giving technical advice through Kisan Mobile service, electronic & print mass media for quality production and creating mass awareness among the farming community for developing a positive attitudes towards mushroom enterprise.

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