



Study of the participation of farm women in production of vermicompost

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ABSTRACT

The present study was purposively conducted in Parbhani, Gangakhed, Jintur and Purna Talukas of Parbhani District of Marathwada region of Maharashtra state being the considerable area under vermicompost production existence in order to assess the participation of farm women in production of vermicompost. Three villages from each Taluka were selected randomly. Ten farm women from each village were selected as the respondents for the study. The ex-post-facto-statistical design was used for the present investigation. It was found that characteristics of the respondents like education, land holding, annual income, socio-economic status, source of information, social participation and extension contact had positive and significant relationship with participation level whereas age showed negatively significant relationship with participation in production of vermicompost.

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INTRODUCTION

Vermicomposting is less labour-intensive than traditional plant composting because the worms do almost all of the work. All compost mixes microorganisms, organic matter and nutrients, but adding worms also improves soil structure. Due to the slime produced by worm bodies, nutrients stay in soil even after a good rain. Worm castings hold beneficial microorganisms longer than the traditional compost. Worms can eat up to half of their body weight per day and -under optimal conditions -reproduce quickly, making vermiculture a self-sustaining business.

Vermicomposting is the process of creating compost with worms. The worms are fed items like kitchen scraps, which they digest to create castings that are used for a variety of applications. This process has multiple benefits.

Besides housing beneficial microorganisms, worm castings protect the plants. Root diseases are reduced due to the diversity of organisms present, none of them becomes populous enough to cause damage.

Farm women play an important role in farm enterprises. Since immemorial women support to the family by earning and

undertaking various type of work. Farm women are considered as invisible works force in various agricultural operations.

According to NATP Annual Report (Anonymous, 2003), vermicomposting as enterprise has been promoted at centres like Udaipur, Dharwad, Parbhani, Hisar, New Delhi and Ludhiana, where more than 100 beneficiaries has been running this enterprise successfully and earning good amount of money.

Hence, the present study was undertaken to find out extend of participation level of farm women in production of vermicompost with the help of the following objectives: to the study relationship between personal and socio-economic characteristics of farm women with knowledge in production of vermicompost and to study the participation level of farm women about production of vermicompost.

METHODOLOGY

The present study was purposively undertaken in Parbhani, Gangakhed, Jintur and Purna Talukas of Parbhani district of Marathawada region of Maharashtra state as the considerable area is under vermicompost production existence in order to assess the

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knowledge level of farm women about production of vermicompost. Three villages from each Taluka were selected randomly. The list of farmers of selected villages was prepared with the help of Gramsevak and Agricultural Assistant of respective villages. The farmers from each village were arranged alphabetically and random sample of 10 farmers using vermicompost production were drawn by randomization. Thus, on the basis of random sampling, selected farmers from each village were personally interviewed with the help of specially designed interview schedule. The data were subjected to ex-post-facto statistical design.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A study pertaining to participation level of farm women in production of vermicompost was conducted using 120 farmers from selected Talukas of Parbhani district. The results obtained are presented in Tables 1, 2 and 3.

From Table 1, it is seen that half of the respondents (50 per cent) were from medium participation level category while 26.67 per cent of women were in low participation level category. About 23.00 per cent of the farmwomen were belonging to high level category.

A critical look at Table 2, revealed that the method of vermicompost making was decided by 90.00 per cent farm women completely, while 6.67 per cent of farm women were having partial participation, only 3.33 per cent farm women were showing no participation in this activity.

Regarding the selection of earthworm species, majority of farm women (63.33 %) were completely

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to their participation in production of vermicompost

Sr. No.	Category	Respondents	
		Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low	32	26.67
2.	Medium	60	50.00
3.	High	28	23.33
Total		120	100.00

participating followed by partial participation of 30.84 % while only 5.83 per cent of the respondents were from non-participation category.

Regarding the use of raw material, majority of the farm women (95.00 %) were completely using raw material, while 4.17 per cent were partially using it and only 0.83 per cent respondents were showing no participation regarding use of the raw material.

In case of preparation of pit, majority (87.50 %) of the farm women had shown partial participation followed while only 1.67% farm women were from no participation category. In case of application of water during preparation of bed, 83.33 per cent, 7.50 per cent and 4.17 per cent were found in complete, partial and not participating categories, respectively. In case of separation of earthworm from vermicompost, 93.34 per cent respondents had shown partial participation. It was further noticed that 53.34 per cent women sold vermicompost and in case of sale of earthworms, 37.50 per cent of farm women were completely involved.

Lastly, in case of utilization of earning from production of vermicompost, it was observed that majority (79.16 per cent) of farm women were completely utilizing it.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to their practice wise participation in production of vermicompost

Sr. No.	Practice	Participation in production of vermicompost					
		Complete		Partial		No	
		No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
1.	Method of vermicompost making	108	90.00	8	6.67	4	3.33
2.	Selection of earthworm species	76	63.33	37	30.84	7	5.83
3.	Use of raw material for preparation of vermicompost pit	114	95.00	5	4.17	1	0.83
4.	Size of vermicompost pit	48	40.00	46	38.33	26	21.67
5.	Preparation of pit	13	10.83	105	87.50	2	1.67
6.	Covering of pit	109	90.83	6	5.00	5	4.17
7.	Feed supply to earthworm	88	73.33	21	17.51	11	9.16
8.	Application of water during preparation of bed	106	88.33	9	7.50	5	4.17
9.	Separation of earthworm from vermicompost	4	3.33	112	93.34	4	3.33
10.	Sale of vermicompost	64	53.34	28	23.33	28	23.33
11.	Sale of earthworm	31	25.83	45	37.50	44	36.67
12.	Utilization of earnings from production of vermicompost	18	15.00	7	5.84	95	79.16

Table 3: Relationship of personal and socio-economic characteristics of farm women with their participation in production of vermicompost

Sr. No.	Characteristics	R value
1.	Age	-0.501**
2.	Education	0.765**
3.	Land holding	0.308**
4.	Annual income	0.615**
5.	Socio-economic status	0.734**
6.	Social participation	0.720**
7.	Source of information	0.656**
8.	Extension contact	0.660**

It was found that characteristics of the respondents like education, land holding, annual income, socio-economic status, source of information, social participation, and extension contact had positive and significant relationship with participation level whereas only age showed negatively significant relationship with participation in production of vermicompost. Similarly Shinde *et al.* (2002) found that more than half (53.00 per cent) of rural women fully participated or took self decision with regards to storage, harvesting, care and maintenance of livestock, use of farmyard manure, weeding and working as daily labour.

Conclusion:

It was observed from the results that half (50.00 per cent) of the farm women were from medium level participation category. Only 23.33 per cent of farm women were from in high participation category. The probable

reason may be that the farm women have undergone training and realized the importance of vermicompost. It was found that characteristics of the respondents like education, land holding, annual income, socio-economic status, source of information, social participation and extension contact had positive and significant relationship with participation level whereas age showed negatively significant relationship with participation in production of vermicompost.

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