

Entrepreneurial competencies and performance of mushroom producers in Kamburupitiya GN division

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Abstract

The entrepreneurs must act proactively with the environment in order to diminish the negative consequence of the challenging business environment. Entrepreneurial competencies are becoming more important to take such a proactive move towards the environment. Hence, this study's aims were; to examine the relationship between owner's background characteristics and entrepreneurial competencies and to analyze the impact of entrepreneurial competencies on performance. Primary data were collected from randomly selected 45 mushroom producers (owners) in the *Kamburupitiya* DS Division through a field survey using a pretested structured questionnaire. Entrepreneurial competencies were operationalized as an opportunity, organizing, strategic, relationship, commitment and conceptual competencies. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation and regression analysis. Results revealed that, 71.7% of the owners were studied up to G.C.E. Ordinary Level. Further, 32.6% of owners have participated in training sessions before starting their business whereas 67.4% of owners have such training after starting up their mushroom businesses. Regression analysis revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between educational level and the opportunity competency level of respondents ($\beta=.642$, $p<0.1$). Results of the correlation analysis shown that opportunity ($r= 0.71$, $p<0.01$), relationship ($r=0.37$, $p<0.05$), conceptual ($r=0.46$, $p<0.01$), organizing ($r=0.31$, $p<0.05$) and strategic competencies ($r=0.76$, $p<0.01$) were positively and significantly effect on the business performance. Further, regression analysis implied that owners' strategic and opportunity competencies have a direct positive relationship with mushroom production's business performance in the *Kamburupitiya* DS Division. Accordingly, this study concluded that the strategic and opportunity competency levels of entrepreneurs are important to enhance the performance of mushroom production like cottage industries.

Keywords: Background characteristics, Entrepreneurial competencies, Mushroom industry, Performance of cottage industries

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