

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF WOMEN GOAT KEEPERS AND REARING CHALLENGES IN GOAT IN NADIA DISTRICT OF WEST BENGAL

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Abstract: The present research work was done in Nadia district in the State of West Bengal during January, 2011 to December, 2013. Results indicated that where maximum were in the age group of 20-40 years makes up (48%), followed by 0-20 years constitutes 24.66%, 40-60 years and 60 years and above age groups represents 18% and 8.66%. Analysis of the data revealed that the goat rearing is much popular amongst the ST (39.33%), followed by SC (26%) and OBC (19.33%), whereas only 15.33% of goat farmers belong to General Caste. More than half of the goat keepers under study were illiterate (54%) and percentage of women with primary, secondary and higher secondary were 20.66, 19.33, and 6. Goat rearing is much popular amongst the landless, small marginal farmers (46%), followed by the agricultural labourers (38%), whereas, only 11.33% of house wife with part time business holders and 4.66% of service are involved in goat husbandry. Annual income of most of the goat farmers (58%) was within Rs. 15000, and 34% farmers earned medium annual income (Rs. 15000-25000), and only 8% farmers earned more than Rs. 25000 per year. Results indicated that the percentage of women facing the problems lack of grazing land and rainy season were highest represent equal 14% followed by inadequate veterinary services (12.66%), lack of house for goat (11.33%), problem in winter season (10.66), lack of feed and grasses and lack credit facilities equally constitutes (10%), problem in summer season (9.33%) whereas lack of improve breed was problem for minimum 8% cases. From this study, it can be said that goat keeping is still an occupation of poor community, viz., ST and SC community were involved in the goat rearing.

Keywords: Socio-economic profile, goat rearing, farm women, problem.

INTRODUCTION

India is rich in goat population (16.7% of world share) and its genetic biodiversity (FAO, 2010). There are 23 recognized breeds of goats in India (NBAGR, 2014). On the other hand, the state of West Bengal has the 2nd highest goat population (150.69 lakh, All India Livestock Census, 18th, 2007) in the country (with 10.7% of the country's share). Goats play a vital role

in the economy of poor dwellers living in diverse climatic conditions of India. In rural areas goat keeping generates employment at the rate of 4.2% per annum (Dhara *et al.*, 2008). Goats are considered as the fixed deposits for the poorest of the poor supplying fund as and when necessary by virtue of their ready market demand (Sahoo *et al.*, 2004). Goat rearing requires a minimum investment and they are managed by household wastage. So, no extra management cost is required for them. The role of women in goat keeping is very significant in the rural families and goat is the most important means through which rural women are able to contribute meaningfully to the cash needs for her and their family members. Keeping in view of its association “a front line demonstration on feeding and housing management systems of goat rearing” is being initiated by Nadia Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Bidhan Chandra Krishi Viswavidyalaya, Gayeshpur, Nadia with two specific objectives, *viz.*, (i) to study the socio-economic profile of women goat keepers and (ii) to study the rearing challenges in goat by women goat keepers under village conditions.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present research work was done in Nadia district in the state of West Bengal during January, 2011 to December, 2013. The district Nadia is selected purposively. It lies between 22°52`30” and 24°05`40” parallels of North latitudes and 22°08`10” and 88°48`15” meridians of East Longitudes. Five villages of each of the two blocks have been considered for this study, *viz.*, Mollabelia, Panpur, Kurumbelia, Nischintapur and Madhpur villages of Haringhata block and Gopalpur, Betnakutirpara, Muchiphulbari, Itabaria and Dhakuria villages of Hanskhali block. From each of the selected villages, 15 women goat keepers have been selected randomly. In this way 150 women goat keepers have been selected from 10 villages of the two blocks which have been constituted the sample of the present study. The climate of Nadia district is characterized by an oppressive hot summer, high humidity all the year round and well distributed rainfall (annual average rainfall 1419 mm). Average daily maximum temperature is 31.8°C, and minimum temperature is 21.3°C during the period of study. Humidity is high throughout the year, average being 61.5% (minimum) to 92.9% (maximum). The study area is located in hot-humid zone having three distinct seasons, *viz.*, summer (March to June), monsoon (July to October) and winter (November to February). A pilot study has been carried out, and accordingly a structured interview schedule has been constructed. The data has been collected through face-to-face interview and by direct observation method. Data pertaining to farmers’ socio-economic profile parameters; *viz.*, age, caste, education, occupation and annual income were recorded. Information on problem faced

by women goat keepers like lack of house for goat, lack grazing land, lack of feed and grasses, lack credit facilities, problem in rainy season, problem in summer season, problem in winter season and lack of improved breed were recorded. Data were analyzed following the standard statistical methods (Snedecor and Cochran, 1967).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-economic profile of women goat keepers

The socio-economic profile of the women goat keepers in terms of age, caste, education, occupation and annual income is presented in Table 1.

Age

From the table it is revealed that where maximum were in the age group of 20-40 years makes up (48%), followed by 0-20 years constitutes 24.66%, 40-60 years and 60 years and above age groups represents 18% and 8.66% (Table 1). The present findings are in close agreement with the finding of Sultana *et al.* (2014).

Caste

Analysis of the data revealed that the goat rearing is much popular amongst the ST (39.33%), followed by SC (26%) and OBC (19.33%), whereas only 15.33% of goat farmers belong to General Caste (Table 1). Nandi *et al.* (2011) reported that the goat farming is much popular amongst the SC (44.97%), followed by General Caste (26.30%) and by ST community (24.30%), whereas only 4.42% of goat farmers belong to OBC. Samanta *et al.* (2009) reported that the general trend of goat farming is preferred by the SC and ST communities over others, and most of the OBC people do not prefer goat farming; this finding is in accordance to present findings.

Educational status

More than half of the goat keepers under study were illiterate (54%) and percentage of women with primary, secondary and higher secondary were 20.66, 19.33, and 6 (Table 1). This finding is corroborated with findings of Samanta *et al.* (2009) and Nandi *et al.* (2011) who reported that the maximum women goat farmers are illiterate.

Occupation

Goat rearing is much popular amongst the landless, small marginal farmers (46%), followed by the agricultural labourers (38%), whereas, only 11.33% of house wife with part time business holders and 4.66% of service are involved in goat husbandry (Table 1). Tudu *et al.* (2004) observed that the tribal goat keeping respondents were marginal farmers; had a small herd size; were engaged in agriculture as their main occupation. Samanta *et al.* (2009)

reported that 57.44% of the farmers were dependent on both agriculture and animal husbandry as main source of earning. 23.08% depended only on agriculture and 8.31% of farmers solely depended on animal husbandry. Nandi *et al.* (2011) reported that the goat farming was more popular amongst the landless, small and marginal farmers (58.1%).

Income of farmers' family

Annual income of most of the goat farmers (58%) was within Rs. 15000, and 34% farmers earned medium annual income (Rs. 15000-25000), and only 8% farmers earned more than Rs. 25000 per year (Table 1). Tudu *et al.* (2004) observed that the tribal goat-keeping respondents were earning less than Rs. 7000 per year from all sources. Samanta *et al.* (2009) reported that annual income of most of the goat farmers (40.11%) was within Rs. 5,000.00, whereas 24.36% and 27.09% farmers earned Rs. 5-10 thousands and 10-20 thousands respectively; and only 8.80% farmers earned more than Rs. 20 thousands per year. Nandi *et al.* (2011) reported that the annual income of most of the goat farmers (64.47%) was within Rs. 10,000, and 26.73% farmers earned within Rs 10,000-20,000, and only 8.80% farmers earned more than Rs. 20 thousands per year.

Rearing challenges in goat by women goat keepers

Rearing challenges in goat by women goat keepers in the selected villages of Nadia district is presented in Table 2.

Results indicated that the percentage of women facing the problems lack of grazing land and rainy season were highest represent equal 14% followed by inadequate veterinary services (12.66%), lack of house for goat (11.33%), problem in winter season (10.66), lack of feed and grasses and lack credit facilities equally constitutes (10%), problem in summer season (9.33%) whereas lack of improve breed was problem for minimum 8% cases (Table 2). The present findings are in close agreement with the finding of Sultana *et al.* (2014).

CONCLUSION

From this study, it can be concluded that goat keeping is still an occupation of poor community, *viz.*, ST and SC community were involved in the goat rearing. For any goat improvement programme, female members should be engaged in training programme. Training should be offered in such a way that illiterate people can follow this. Awareness programme should be strengthened in light of providing housing to the goats, which is essential for scientific goat production management.

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Table 1: Socio-economic profile of women goat keepers in selected villages of Nadia district of West Bengal

Variables	Category	Total number	Percentage (%)
Age	0-20 years	37	24.66
	20-40 years	73	48.66

	40-60 years	27	18.00
	60 years and above	13	8.66
Caste	General	23	15.33
	OBC	29	19.33
	Scheduled Caste	39	26.00
	Scheduled Tribe	59	39.33
Education	Illiterate	81	54.00
	Primary standard	31	20.66
	Secondary standard	29	19.33
	Higher secondary standard	9	6.00
Occupation	Landless, small and marginal farmers	69	46.00
	Agricultural labourers	57	38.00
	house wife with part time business holders	17	11.33
	Service	7	4.66
Annual income	Low income group (within Rs. 15000.00)	87	58.00
	Medium income group (Rs. 15000.00-25000.00)	51	34.00
	High income group (Above Rs. 25000.00)	12	8.00

Table 2: Problem faced by women goat keepers in selected villages of Nadia district of West Bengal

Nature of problem	Number of farmers	Percentage (%)
Lack of house for goat	17	11.33
Lack grazing land	21	14.00
Lack of feed and grasses	15	10.00
Inadequate veterinary services	19	12.66
Lack credit facilities	15	10.00
Problem in rainy season	21	14.00
Problem in summer season	14	9.33
Problem in winter season	16	10.66
Lack of improve breed	12	8.00