Research Article

STUDY ON ASSESSING THE KNOWLEDGE LEVEL ON ANIMAL HUSBANDRY PRACTICES BY DAIRY FARMERS IN KURNOOL DISTRICT

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Abstract: The present study was carried out to find out the knowledge levels on Animal husbandry related activities among the dairy farmers in adopted villages who have been receiving regular guidance and technical support from KVK, Banavasi, Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh. A total of 120 farmers from 3 mandals were selected using simple random sampling method and a series of questions covering aspects like breeding, feeding, health care and clean milk production were administered and knowledge levels were recorded. From the study it was revealed that majority of the beneficiaries (63.67%) had medium level of knowledge about selected animal husbandry practices followed by low level of knowledge category (19.67%). However, 16.66 percent of the beneficiaries were in the high level knowledge category. It could be concluded that most of the beneficiaries had medium knowledge about animal husbandry practices.

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Introduction

Animal husbandry and Agriculture are the backbones of Indian rural economy providing employment to around 75% of the rural population. The progress of the nation, therefore, is linked with the advancement in animal husbandry and agriculture. Development of animal husbandry and agriculture in India can only be made possible through scientific education of the farmers and youth, mostly living in the villages. Due to recent advances in technologies in agriculture and animal husbandry, farmers are tempted to know all about its dimensions and feasibility. Transfer of fast emerging technologies to the users by means of training is the basic component of development. Training is an integral part of the infrastructure of such developing countries, like India where a large number of people are illiterate, ignorant of latest information on animal husbandry and living at subsistence level, psychologically week and professionally handicapped.

The turning point and giant leap in this direction came with the establishment of Farm Science Centre or Krishi Vigyan Kendra by ICAR in 1974. Since then more than 730 KVKs have been established till date.

Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) is a noble concept developed by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) which was rest upon a solid base of transfer of technology (ToT) from laboratory to farmers field. As it is clear that, the KVK is meant for bridging the gap between investing the technology and its actual application on the field by farmers. However, the prime objective of the KVK is to impart need based, skill oriented and vocational training to the rural people and other various activities with a view to help them to bring excellence in their occupational performance. KVK undertakes various transfers of technology programmes like trainings, front line demonstrations, on farm testing's and extension activities. The present study was carried out to know the knowledge level of farmers of Animal husbandry related activities in adopted villages of KVK, Banavasi where sizeable farmers are practicing animal husbandry as livelihood and receiving regular guidance and technical support from KVK, Banavasi, Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh.

The data was collected from the total of 120 respondents by conducting personal interview schedule which was pretested before using it for the collection of the data. The qualitative data was converted into quantitative form.

Material and Methods

The present study was undertaken in Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh. Animal husbandry is considered as an important allied component of agriculture. It is a subsidiary and allied occupation for most of the peasants. There has been inseparable linkage between animal husbandry and agriculture development. Both animal husbandry and agriculture are mutually inter dependent for their growth and development.

Selection of villages and beneficiaries

The present study was carried in 3 adopted mandals of Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Banavasi, in the year 2019-20 in 3 mandals *i.e.*, Yemmiganur, Gonegandla and Nandavaram where 40 farmers from each mandal were randomly selected using simple random selection method based on the database from Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Banavsi.

Construction of knowledge test for measuring knowledge

Knowledge refers to a body of understood information possessed by an individual. The present investigation was carried out with an objective to find out the knowledge level of beneficiaries regarding animal husbandry practices.

For this purpose, a knowledge test was developed which consisted a set of pertinent questions and the possible maximum score one could obtain was 69. Five major selected animal husbandry practices were included in the schedule *viz*., breeding, feeding, management, health care and clean milk production. Each major practice was further divided in to several questions to explore existing knowledge of beneficiaries. The knowledge score of each respondent was calculated by assigning marks for the correctly answered questions.

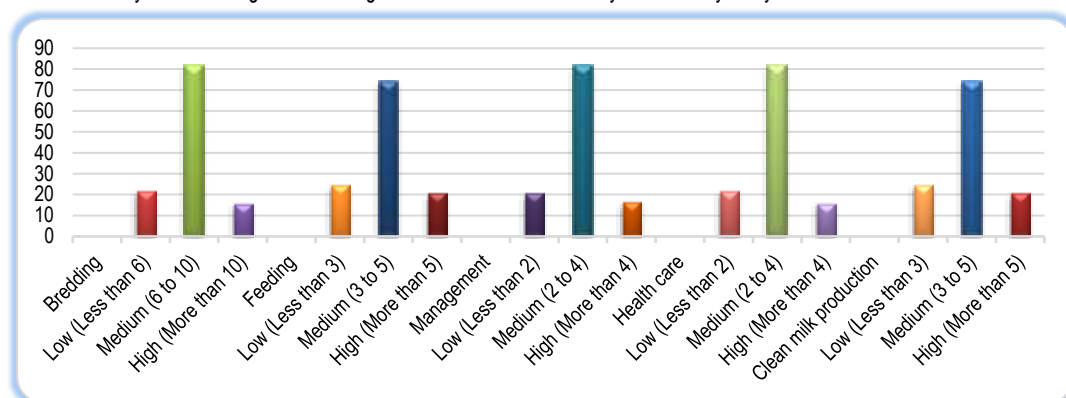Study on Assessing the Knowledge Level on Animal Husbandry Practices by Dairy farmers in Kurnool district

Fig-1 Distribution of beneficiaries according to their level of knowledge in different areas of animal husbandry practices

Every right answer was given one mark and zero for the wrong answer. The usual procedure for construction of knowledge test in social science was followed. The knowledge test was subjected to expert opinion and pre-testing. Accordingly, the modifications were incorporated. Content validity was in built in the procedure as the content was judged by a panel of 15 experts. Test-retest method of reliability was applied to know the reliability of the test. The coefficient calculated for test was 0.76 which was highly significant.

Results

Knowledge of the beneficiaries about selected animal husbandry practices

This section presents information regarding knowledge of beneficiaries about various aspects of animal husbandry viz., breeding, feeding, management, health care and clean milk production. On the basis of mean score and standard deviation, knowledge of the beneficiaries was classified into three categories viz., low, medium and high as described in the chapter of methodology. Data have been presented in frequency and percentage in [Table-1] and [Fig-1].

Table-1 *Distribution of beneficiaries according to their level of knowledge in different areas of animal husbandry practices (N=120)*

SN	Category	Frequency	Percent
Breeding			
1	Low (Less than 6)	22	18.67
2	Medium (6 to 10)	82	68.00
3	High (More than 10)	16	13.33
Total		120	100.00
Feeding			
1	Low (Less than 3)	25	20.67
2	Medium (3 to 5)	74	61.67
3	High (More than 5)	21	17.66
Total		120	100.00
Management			
1	Low (Less than 2)	21	17.33
2	Medium (2 to 4)	82	68.34
3	High (More than 4)	17	14.33
Total		120	100.00
Health care			
1	Low (Less than 2)	22	18.67
2	Medium (2 to 4)	82	68.00
3	High (More than 4)	16	13.33
Total		120	100.00
Clean milk production			
1	Low (Less than 3)	25	20.67
2	Medium (3 to 5)	74	61.67
3	High (More than 5)	21	17.66
Total		120	100.00

Breeding

[Table-1] and [Fig-1] revealed that majority of the beneficiaries had medium level of knowledge (68.00%) followed by low level of knowledge (18.67%). Only 13.33 percent of the beneficiaries had high level of knowledge about improved breeding practices. Majority of farmers have medium level of knowledge pertaining to breeding practices *i.e.*, Artificial insemination, maintaining of good fertility status and checking done after 90-120 days of successful Artificial insemination but the access was bit tough to approach the veterinary dispensaries in time.

Feeding

In case of feeding, maximum number of beneficiaries had medium level of knowledge (61.67%) whereas 20.67 and 17.66 percent of them had low and high level of knowledge on improved feeding practices respectively. This might be due to lack of interest of beneficiaries in feeding management and lack of knowledge about the different methods of conservation of feed and fodder, various methods to enhance feed and fodder nutritive value and likewise feeding management practices particularly during off seasons and in scarcity.

Management

It is evident from [Table-1] and [Fig-1] that in the area of management majority of beneficiaries had medium level of knowledge (68.34%) followed by low (17.33%) and high (13.33%) level of knowledge on improved management practices among dairy farmers. It was found that majority 85.67 percent of beneficiaries belonged to medium to low category. The probable reason might be that housing facility are less because of poor economic background, where provision of good housing is tough for them.

Health Care

[Table-1] and [Fig-1] depicts that in the case of health care majority of the beneficiaries were in medium knowledge category (68.00%) followed by low (18.67%) and high (13.33%) knowledge as per as health care aspects are concerned. Almost all the farmers were having good knowledge regarding health care to prevent the dairy animals from infectious diseases and some basic health care knowledge regarding care of pregnant animals and new born calves which are most important health care practices in animal husbandry.

Clean Milk Production

Data presented in [Table-1] and [Fig-1] shows that in case of clean milk production maximum number of beneficiaries were in medium knowledge category (61.67%). However, 20.67 and 17.66 percent of the beneficiaries were in low and high knowledge category respectively. As there is growing awareness on consumption of clean milk production 79.33% of farmers were adopting clean milk practice methods in their farms.

The results are in line with Sharma *et al*. (2007), Meena (2010) and Kaur (2011). They also revealed that majority of the beneficiaries had medium knowledge regarding dairying and other animal husbandry practices.

Table-2 *Distribution of beneficiaries according to their level of overall knowledge levels regarding improved animal husbandry practices*

SN	Category	Frequency	Percent
1	Low (Less than 25)	24	19.67
2	Medium (25 to 50)	76	63.67
3	High (More than 50)	20	16.66
	Total	120	100.00

Data presented in [Table-2] depicts that majority of the beneficiaries (63.67%) had medium level of knowledge about selected improved animal husbandry practices followed by low level of knowledge category (19.67%). However, 16.66 percent of the beneficiaries were in the high level knowledge category.

Conclusion

From the above findings it can be concluded that most of the beneficiaries had medium knowledge about animal husbandry practices in adopted villages. From the study it was clear that medium level of extension contacts and mass media exposure, besides their medium level of experience in dairy farming and their primary to secondary level of formal education might have been the probable reason for medium knowledge levels.

Application of research: Here, 19.67 per cent of beneficiaries had low level of overall knowledge which was mainly attributed to illiteracy, small herd size and poor economic status and low level of social participation.

Research Category: Animal Husbandry

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Cultivar / Variety / Breed name: Nil

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