



SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF LIVESTOCK FARMERS OF NAVASARI DISTRICT OF SOUTH GUJARAT

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Abstract- The study was conducted following exploratory research design to ascertain the profile characteristics of livestock farmers in rural and urban areas of Navasari District. In the rural areas 53.5, 42 and 4.5 percent of dairy animal owners were from middle, old and young age group category while in urban areas the proportion of the dairy animal owners in the above mentioned age group was 62, 23 and 15 per cent, respectively. In rural area 11, 29.5, 52.5 and 7 percent of the dairy farmers were illiterate, functional literate, educated up to secondary and graduate and above level while it was 11, 36, 47 and 6 percent in urban area, respectively. Hence, efforts should be undertaken by the Government, Veterinary Universities and other extension agencies in providing information on livestock farming practices so that they could bring about change in their living and improve the socio-economic status of livestock farmers.

Keywords- Livestock Farmer, Socio-economic change, Veterinary Extension.

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Introduction

Livestock rearing, which was a way of life in the past, is now assuming the form of gainful business occupation. Livestock production and dairy development have been viewed by planners and policy makers as an effective instrument of social and economic change in the rural areas, as they provide employment to the weaker sections and thereby help them in augmenting their income. Out of total livestock in the country, 80 % is owned by small and marginal farmers and landless farm labourers. The livestock, thus, make large contributions to the development of rural economy and help the rural masses to improve their standard of living. India occupies the foremost position among the countries of world in respect of livestock wealth and annual milk production. Production potential of livestock depends mostly on the management practices under which they are reared and these practices vary significantly across various agro-ecological regions due to many factors. Understanding of livestock management practices followed by farmers in a region is necessary to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the rearing systems and to formulate suitable intervention policies [1].

Materials and Methods

A field survey was conducted to collect information on array of existing housing and feeding management practices followed by dairy animal owners of this region. The Navsari district is situated at 20°51'N (latitude) and 72°55'E (longitude) in the South Eastern part of Gujarat state. Navsari district is spread over five talukas, 366 gram panchayats and 374 villages. Majority of the population live in rural areas (72.6%), who are mostly engaged in agriculture, animal husbandry, floriculture and horticulture, small scale and cottage industry, sugar industry, agro & food processing. Out of the five talukas under Navasari district four of them namely Navsari, Jalalpore, Gandevi and Chikhli were selected for the purpose of this study. Ten rural villages were selected randomly from each taluka and from each selected village five respondents having more than two dairy animals (cattle/buffalo/both) were chosen with the help of Talati cum Mantri

(Tehasildar)/members of village dairy cooperative, which constituted a total of 200 respondents from rural area. Further, twenty-five respondents were selected from urban area of each taluka, which constituted a total of 100 respondents. Hence, finally, 300 selected respondents were interviewed and the desired information was collected with the help of Pre-designed and pre-tested questionnaire.

Results and Discussion

Personal, Socio-economic Characteristics of Livestock Farmers:

It could be observed from [Table-1] that in the rural areas, 85 per cent of the respondents belonged to nuclear type family and 15 per cent to joint type family whereas in urban area 68 per cent and 32 per cent of the respondents belonged to joint and nuclear type of family, respectively. Halakatti *et al.* (2007) and Sabapara *et al.* (2010) [2,3] reported similar findings. So, it can be concluded that the advantages of joint family system is not being aware and this system is slowly declining in due course of time even in rural and urban areas. It is observed that, in rural area small and large family size was observed in 59.5 and 40.5 percent of the respondents whereas it was found to be 59 and 41 per cent in urban areas, respectively. Similar findings were reported by Nataraju and Channegowda (1986) and Mundhwa and Padheria (1998) [4,5].

In the rural areas of Navsari district 56, 1 and 43 percent of respondents were member in at least one organization, member in more than one organization and not a member in any organization while in urban area it was 51, zero and 49 per cent, respectively. It was further observed that they were member of village dairy co-operative society, gram panchayat etc. In contrast to the findings of this study Patil *et al.* (1975) [7] and Sabapara *et al.* (2010) [3] found higher level of participation of dairy farmers while however Shinde *et al.* (1998) [7], Mundhwa and Padheria (1998) [5] observed that about half of the dairy farmer were not a member of any society.

Perusal of the data revealed that in the rural areas 53.5, 42 and 4.5 percent of dairy animal owners were from middle, old and young age group category while in urban areas the proportion of the dairy animal owners in the above-mentioned age

group was 62, 23 and 15 per cent, respectively. Similar findings were reported by Ray *et al.* (2004), Gangil and Dabos (2005), Gautam *et al.* (2007), Gill and Saini (2008) and Divekar and Saiyed (2009) [8-12]. However, there are variation in the

findings due to the scale used to classify the respondents into different age groups and overall demographic structure of the regions.

Table-1 Personal, Socio-economic Characteristics of Livestock Farmers

Sr. No.	Personal, Socio-economic characteristics	Rural (%F)	Urban (%F)
1	Family Type		
	Joint type	15(30)	32(32)
	Nuclear type	85(170)	68(68)
2	Family Size		
	Small size (up to 4 members)	59.5(119)	59(59)
	Large size (above 4 members)	40.5(81)	41(41)
3	Social Participation		
	No participation	43(86)	49(49)
	Membership in one organization	56(112)	51(51)
	Membership in more than one organization	1(2)	0(0)
4	Age		
	1. Young (≤ 30 years)	4.5 (9)	15 (15)
	2. Middle(31–50 Years)	53.5(107)	62 (62)
	Old (> 50 Years)	42 (84)	23 (23)
5	Extension contacts		
	Yes	60 (120)	73(73)
	No	40(80)	27(27)
6	Land holding		
	Landless	21.5(43)	5(5)
	Marginal (up to 1.25 acres)	25.5(51)	43(43)
	Small (1.25 to 2.5 acres)	31(62)	39(39)
	Large (2.5 above)	22(44)	13(13)
7	Animal holding Size		
	Small (2-5 animals)	70.5(141)	8(8)
	Medium (6-10 animals)	22(44)	33(33)
	Large (> 10 Animals)	7.5(15)	59(59)

Regarding extension contacts in Navsari district, we found that majority of the respondents in the rural (60%) and urban (73%) area had extension contacts. Singh and Sastry (2002) [13] in their study also reported that about 60 per cent of the respondents had medium level of extension contact with the technical expert of the animal husbandry. It was found that in the rural area 31, 25.5, 22 and 21.5 per cent of the dairy farmers were small, marginal, large and landless farmers while it was 39, 43, 13 and 5 per cent in urban area, respectively. Proportion of small and marginal farmer was higher and large and landless farmers were lower in urban areas than in rural areas. This is probably due to the fact that land was more limited resource hence lesser number of large farmers was observed in urban areas and dairying was supposed to be a more commercial venture which was not suitable for the landless farmers.

In rural the area, majority (70.5%) of the respondents had small herd size followed by medium (22%) and large size herd (7.5%), whereas in urban area majority (59%) of the respondents had large herd size followed by medium (33%) and small (8%) herd size. It might be due to the fact that in urban areas demand of milk is usually higher and they also get higher price hence farmers tend to have larger to medium herd size.

Conclusions

A field survey was conducted to acquire the first hand information on dairy husbandry practices in the Navsari district of South Gujarat with the objectives to study personal, social and economic characteristics of dairy animal owners, existing dairy husbandry practices, constraints perceived in adoption of improved dairy husbandry practices and knowledge level of dairy animal owners about modern dairy husbandry practices. Majority of the respondents were from middle age group (56.33%), had education up to secondary level (50.67%), belong to other backward category (59.67%), had small family size (59.33%), nuclear family (79.33%), 31.33 per cent of them were marginal farmer, 66 per cent of respondents followed mixed farming system in which agriculture together with dairying was main source of income and majority of them had small herd size of less than 5 animals (49.67 %).

Conflict of Interest: None declared

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