



Awareness and Participation of Goat Farmers in Various Market Led Institutions in Tamil Nadu

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to assess the level of awareness and participation of goat farmers in various market-led institutions in Tiruchirappalli and Salem districts of Tamil Nadu. A sample size of 120 goat farmers (60 farmers from each district) who were actively involved in goat rearing selected randomly for the study. A well structured, pre-tested interview schedule was employed for the data collection. The study revealed that 61.67 per cent of respondents were aware about farmer interest groups (FIG's) and only 1.67 per cent of farmer producer organizations (FPO's). All the selected respondents were aware of farmers' shandy and almost (98.33%) un-organized goat markets. The limited awareness with respect to FPO's was due to the fact that the farmers were not apprised of the significance of FPO's by rural banks and other Government agencies. Further, the data also revealed that majority (98.33 %) of goat farmers had no participation in Farmer interest groups while about 50.83 per cent of respondents had partial participation in weekly bazaar for goats.

Key Words: Awareness, Goat farmers, Market-led institutions, Participation, Tamil Nadu.

INTRODUCTION

Goat farming is one of the fastest growing businesses in India as the demand for goat meat is increasing. Most of the people are showing interest to raise the goats or start commercial goat farming (Kumar, 2007). The advantage of goats is that they can be raised along with other livestock. The initial investment needed for goat farming is low. Due to small body size and docile nature, housing requirements and management problems with goats are less. Goat is a multi functional animal and plays a significant role in the economy and nutrition of landless, small and marginal farmers in the country. Goat rearing is an enterprise which has been practiced by a large section of population in rural areas. In pastoral and agricultural subsistence societies in India, goats are kept as a source of additional income and as an insurance against disasters. Because of these characteristics, goat

farming is carried out as a traditional business by majority of small and marginal farmers in India. With regard to marketing, majority of farmers feel that marketing of sheep is traditionally a male dominated activity and a negligible percentage of farm women were involved jointly in purchase and sale of sheep. However, no female was found to be performing this activity independently (Meena and Dudi, 2015). Goat farming is very profitable if done in a planned way. Farmers face various hurdles in rearing goats which varies from production to marketing constraints. Among these constraints, marketing of goats becomes the major hurdle for the farmers as they don't fetch proper price and profit from selling their goats. There is no proper price fixing agency similar to poultry and the marketing of goats is mostly unorganised (Ravikumar and Kumaravel, 2017). This study was carried out to delineate the number of market-led institutions that

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exist currently and the awareness and participation of goat farmers in these market-led institutions was assessed through this study.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Tiruchirappalli and Salem districts of Tamil Nadu state were purposively selected for this study (based on 19th Livestock census, GOI, 2012) owing to the presence of high goat population in Tamil Nadu. Thuraiyur and Thalaivasal blocks were selected purposively from Tiruchirappalli and Salem districts respectively as it contains the highest number of goat population. The blocks were selected based on the blockwise goat population data of the district available at the office of the Joint Director of Animal Husbandry of these two districts. Keerambur and Naduvalur village panchayats located in Thuraiyur block of Tiruchirappalli district and Navakkurichi and Kattukottai village panchayats located in Thalaivasal block of Salem district were selected for the study. The village panchayats were selected randomly after consulting the local Veterinary Assistant Surgeons about the presence of large number of goat population and the involvement of middlemen in marketing of goats in these selected villages. Thirty goat farmers were drawn from each of the selected villages by random sampling technique, thus making the sample size of 120 from the study area. The data were collected by using a pre-tested interview schedule.

Awareness of goat farmers about various market-led institutions

There were five existing market-led institutions in goat farming. The awareness about each market-led institution by the respondents was measured by Yes or No questions and a score of one and zero was assigned respectively. Similar scoring technique was followed by De *et al* (2014). Awareness about various market-led institutions by the respondents was expressed in frequency and percentage. Further, the overall awareness about the market-led institutions was measured by totalling the scores obtained in each market-led institution and the

respondents were divided into low, medium and high awareness categories by mean and standard deviation.

Participation of goat farmers in various market-led institutions

The term participation in this study denotes the active involvement by the goat farmers in various market-led institutions. There were five existing market-led institutions in goat farming. Every individual market-led institution was having (equally) 5 components. Totally there were 25 components. The extent of participation by the respondent in each component was measured by assigning an unit score of one and zero respectively. The respondent who obtained 5 scores for his/her involvement in an individual market-led institution was reckoned to have full participation and the respondent who had involved/participated in 1 to 4 components of a market-led institution was considered as to have partial participation and finally the respondent who doesn't have any involvement in any of the 5 components of a market-led institution was reckoned to have no participation. Further, the total scores of each respondent in all the five market-led institutions were summed up and a final total score for all the 120 respondents was obtained. The respondents were classified into categories namely low, medium and high participation by obtaining mean and Standard deviation (SD).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overall awareness level of goat farmers about various market-led institutions

It could be observed that majority of the respondents had medium level (77.50 %) of awareness about various market-led institutions followed by 21.67 per cent of respondents with low level of awareness and a meagre 0.83 per cent of respondents with high level of awareness (Table 1).

It could be seen from the Table 2, that 61.67 per cent of respondents were aware of farmer interest groups. Only 1.67 per cent of respondents were

Awareness and Participation of Goat Farmers

Table 1. Overall awareness level of goat farmers about market-led institutions. N =120

Awareness level	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Low	26	21.67
Medium	93	77.50
High	1	0.83

Table 2. Distribution of respondents according to their awareness about individual market-led institutions. N=120

Sr. No	Market-led institution	Awareness			
		Aware		Not aware	
		Number of farmers	Percentage	Number of farmers	Percentage
1.	Farmer interest groups	74	61.67	46	38.33
2.	Farmer Producer organisations	2	1.67	118	98.33
3.	Uzhavar Sandhai (Farmers shandy)	120	100	0	0
4.	Weekly bazaar for goats	120	100	0	0
5.	Unorganised goat market	118	98.33	2	1.67

aware of farmer producer organisations (FPO's). This low level of awareness was due to the non-existence of FPO's in the study area as the farmers were not apprised of the significance of FPO's by rural banks and other Government agencies. All the selected respondents were aware of Uzhavar Sandhai (Farmers shandy) initiated by the Government for marketing agricultural and allied produce and products and weekly *bazaar* for goats as were available in their districts. Almost all of the respondents (98.33 %) were aware of unorganised goat market as majority of the farmers, middlemen and traders.

Participation of goat farmers in various market-led institutions

Participation of goat farmers in various market-led institutions refers to their involvement in various market led institutions, which will reduce the exploitation by middlemen in fixing the price of the produce of farmers.

It was evident (Table 3) that more than half (55.83 %) of the respondents had low level of participation in various market-led institutions

followed by 43.33 per cent with medium level of participation and a meagre 0.83 per cent of respondents were having high level of participation in market-led institutions.

Table 3. Overall level of participation of Goat farmers in various market-led institutions.

(N=120)

Participation	Frequency	Percentage
Low	67	55.83
Medium	52	43.33
High	1	0.83

Extent of Participation of goat farmers in individual market-led institutions

It was observed that only a meagre 1.67 per cent of goat farmers had participation in farmer interest group while a majority (98.33 %) of goat farmers had no participation. The lack of participation was due to the non-existence of such groups in the study area. None of the goat farmers had participation in Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO's) and Uzhavar sandhai (Table 4). It was noticed that only rabbits,

Table 4 .Participation of Goat farmers in individual market-led institutions. N=120

Sr. No.	Market-led institutions	Full participation		Partial participation		No participation	
		No. of farmers	Percentage	No. of farmers	Percentage	No. of farmers	Percentage
1.	Farmer interest groups	2	1.67	0	0	118	98.33
2.	Farmer producer	0	0	0	0	120	100
3.	Uzhavar sandhai (Farmers's handy)	0	0	0	0	120	100
4.	Weekly bazaar for goats	35	29.17	61	50.83	24	20
5.	Unorganised goat market	21	17.5	27	22.50	72	60

backyard chickens and their eggs were marketed at Uzhavar sandhai which were focussed only on marketing of vegetables and fruits.

About 50.83 per cent of respondents had partial participation in weekly *bazaar* for goats followed by 29.17 per cent of respondents with high participation and 20 per cent of respondents with no participation in weekly *bazaar* for goats. About 60 per cent of respondents had no participation in unorganised goat markets. This was because of the absence of unorganised goat markets in nearby places of the study area in Tiruchirappalli district and also due to voluntary non-participation of the goat farmers. 22.50 per cent of respondents had partial participation followed by 17.50 per cent of respondents with high participation in unorganised markets. The reason for partial participation in weekly *bazaars* was that the farmers felt that they had to transport their produce (goats) through mini vans to the weekly bazaars for goats and hence they preferred to sell their goats to middlemen in the local area itself.

CONCLUSION

The study revealed that majority of respondents were aware of Farmer interest groups (FIG's) and meager number of respondents were aware of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPO's). All

the selected respondents were aware of Farmers' shandy and almost all of the respondents were aware of unorganized goat markets. In addition, majority of the goat farmers, though were aware of farmer groups but had very limited participation, while about 50.83 per cent of respondents had partial participation in local weekly bazaar for marketing their goats. This implied that farmers need remunerative marketing facility for marketing their goats at their doorsteps.

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Received on 4/02/2019

Accepted on 15/03/2019