



A GENDER PERSPECTIVE STUDY ON ROLE PERFORMANCE AMONG GOAT KEEPERS IN NORTHERN REGION OF KERALA

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Abstract

The present study was conducted to evaluate the role performance in goat farming activities among goat keepers of Northern region of Kerala. The study was conducted at six centers of the All India Coordinated Research Project for the improvement of Malabari goat viz. Thaliparamba and Thalassery, Perambra and Vadakara, Kottakkal and Tanur which belongs to Kannur, Kozhikode and Malappuram district of Northern region respectively. A well structured pre-tested interview schedule was developed at the Centre for Advanced Studies in Animal Genetics and Breeding, College of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Mannuthy, Kerala. From a total of 360 randomly selected goat keepers 60 each from all the six centres were selected for the study. In goat farming, independent participation of women was noticed in the practices of colostrums feeding, grazing of animals, collection and disposal of pellets, feeding, watering, care of pregnant animals, care at kidding time, providing special feed to kidded animals and cleaning of pens. Joint participation with the spouse, however was found in the activities like cleaning and grooming of animals, chaffing of fodder, care of young one immediately after birth, providing special feed and medicine to sick and deworming of animals. Males were more involved in health care, decision making and marketing related activities. It was concluded that goat keeping was an integral part of livelihood of rural families. Rural males were engaged more in outdoor activities. Both men and women were managing the activities of goat farming. Thus they may be encouraged to take goat farming as entrepreneurial activity for better earning and sustainable livelihood.

Introduction

Owing to the greater socio-economic relevance of goat farming in India, the growth in goat population in the country over the past five decade has been steady adding 1.484 million goats annually. About 70 per cent of the landless agricultural labourers, marginal and small farmers, mostly women in the country are associate with goat husbandry (Kumar *et.al.*, 2010). Rural women play a major role in goat husbandry in India. It's an important source of income and employment for women and also a vital source of animal protein for their family (Narmatha *et.al.*, 2015). They assume many activities relating to goat husbandry like feeding of animals, cure of animals, watering of animals, collection of dung, milking, feeding and cleaning of animal sheds. It is widely accepted that most of the critical roles related to goat husbandry are played by the women (Arshad *et.al.*, 2013). They are referred as invisible farmers especially in animal husbandry including goat farming. In animal and goat production activities, women are active partners in almost all the activities sharing work more than 60%. Even though, the men and women involved in routine farm activities of goat production activities. It is necessary to find out the percentage of contribution made by men and women. Northern region of Kerala contribute major part of goat population of the state and they are mostly maintained by women. In this backdrop, The present study was aimed to highlight empirically the gender perspective in goat production activities in terms of their level of participation in varied activities, thus may be useful in developing a strategic model for inclusion of rural women in entrepreneurship development programmes with sustainable interventions for addressing both the practical and strategic issues.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted at six centers of the All India Coordinated Research Project for the improvement of Malabari goat viz. Thaliparamba and Thalassery, Perambra and Vadakara, Kottakkal and Tanur which belongs to Kannur, Kozhikode and Malappuram district of Northern region respectively. A well structured pre-tested interview schedule was developed at the Centre for Advanced Studies in Animal Genetics and Breeding, College of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Mannuthy, Kerala. From a total of 360 randomly selected goat keepers 60 each from all the six centres were selected for the study. The data were collected personally with help of structured interview schedule developed for

the study, which enlisted goat farming activities in relation to general nutrition, breeding, health care, housing management, marketing and entrepreneurial activities. Gender-wise participation was recorded in terms of only male, only female and jointly by asking the respondents to mention their responses in each of goat farming activity.

Result and Discussion

Table 1. summarizes gender-wise participation of farmers involved in various goat farming activities in northern region of Kerala, India.

General management

Many of the general goat management activities like grazing, collection and disposal of pellet and colostrum feeding were found to be highly women oriented activities. Participation of male members was found higher in casting of animals. Joint participation however, was reported higher in the activities related to cleaning and grooming of animals followed by 'only by males' in the family. This was in line with the findings of Mohan, *et al.*, 2008).

Nutrition management

Involvement of males was found to be higher in most of the fodder cultivation and harvesting related activities as well as in preservation of fodder. Higher involvement of women was reported in the activities like preparation of concentrate feeds, feeding and watering of their animals. Chaffing of fodder was an activity wherein both males and females were involved in most of the cases. Women and children generally looked after the activities of tending of goats at home, keeping the place clean, milking, giving water and stall feeding (Hulela, 2010). Concentrate feeding, stall feeding and providing drinking water to goats were mainly done by rural women.

Breeding management

Independent participation of women was found more in care of pregnant goats, care at kidding time and providing special feeds and medicine to kidded animals under breeding management. Further it was observed that high male participation was predominant in activities related to observing animals at the time of estrus and taking estrus animals for breeding. Interestingly both male and females were involved in the activities of caring of young ones after birth like removal of mucus and cutting and disinfection of umbilical cords of kids (Nandi, *et al.*, 2011).

Health management

Male members were involved independently in most of the health care management activities like identifying the sick animals, bringing veterinary doctor at home or taking sick animals to hospital for treatment as compared to their spouse (Tudu and Roy, 2015a). High joint participation however, was observed in deworming of animals. The independent participation of women in health care management activities was comparatively lesser than the males.

Housing management

Construction and management of pen was found to be male dominated task. Involvement of women was higher in the cleaning of goat pens.

Marketing

Majority of the respondents revealed that marketing of animals was traditionally being a male dominated activity. However, percentage of respondents involved jointly in purchase and sale of goats was negligible. However, no female was found to be performing this activity independently (Rajkumar and Kavitha, 2014).

Entrepreneurial activities

Most of the goat entrepreneurial activities like getting credit and inputs, selection and purchasing of animals, culling and disposal of animals, attending meeting and training regarding goat farming, fixing price of animals and decision making about goat farming were performed predominantly by male members (Tudu and Roy, 2015b). Most of the daily routine operations of goat farming were mainly performed by women except cultivation, harvesting and preservation of fodder, casting of animal, breeding, health care, marketing and entrepreneurial activities. Women actively participated in health care as they had learnt the things by seeing and out of experience. Most of the respondents interviewed were of the view that they require lot of training and knowledge with regards to goat rearing. Women and children played an important role in rearing of goats, although they owned fewer goats than men and were less involved in decisions regarding sales (Byaruhanga *et al.*, 2015).

In conclusion study indicated that proper attention is needed for improving the knowledge, skill and resources of rural women in such farming activities to empower them economically. In view of their larger contribution in goat farming, the policies and programmes should address empowerment of rural women through development of sustainable livelihood opportunities based on goat farming.

Table 1. Gender-wise participation in goat farming activities

<i>Activities</i>	<i>Gender wise participation</i>		
	<i>Only by male</i>	<i>Only by female</i>	<i>Jointly</i>
General management			
Cleaning and grooming of animals	110 (30.56)	34 (9.44)	216 (60.00)
Casting of animals	215 (59.72)	38 (10.56)	107 (29.72)
Grazing of animals	103 (28.61)	207 (57.50)	50 (13.89)
Collection and disposal of pellets	72 (20.00)	193 (53.61)	85 (26.39)
Colostrums feeding	54 (15.00)	225 (62.50)	81 (22.50)
Nutritional management			
Cultivation of fodder	117 (32.50)	-	72 (20.00)
Harvesting of fodder	117 (32.50)	-	61 (16.94)
Chaffing of fodder	97 (26.94)	65 (18.06)	198 (55.00)
Preservation of fodder	230 (63.89)	22 (6.11)	108 (30.00)
Preparation of concentrate feeds	100 (27.78)	224 (62.22)	36 (10.00)
Providing feed to the animals	85 (23.61)	215 (59.72)	60 (16.67)
Providing water to the animals	72 (20.00)	225 (62.50)	63 (17.50)
Breeding management			
Observing the animals at the time of estrus	216 (60.00)	45 (12.50)	99 (27.50)
Taking estrus animal for breeding	54 (15.00)	-	-
Care of pregnant animals	64 (17.78)	224 (62.22)	72 (20.00)
Care of kidding time	144 (40.00)	171 (47.50)	45 (12.50)

<i>Activities</i>	<i>Gender wise participation</i>		
	<i>Only by male</i>	<i>Only by female</i>	<i>Jointly</i>
Providing special feed to kidded animals	54 (15.00)	234 (65.00)	72 (20.00)
Care of young one after birth	117 (32.50)	99 (27.50)	144 (40.00)
Health management			
Deworming of animals	135 (37.50)	-	225 (62.50)
Identifying the sick animals	171 (47.50)	36 (10.00)	153 (42.50)
Bringing Vet. Doctors at home/ taking sick animal for treatments	288 (80.00)	27 (7.50)	45 (12.50)
Providing special feed and medicine to sick animals	162 (45.00)	36	162 (45.00)
Housing management			
Construction and management of pen	288 (80.00)	-	72 (20.00)
Cleaning of pen	54 (15.00)	243 (67.50)	63 (17.50)
Disinfection of pen	54 (14.50)	18 (5.00)	27 (7.50)
Marketing of animals	324 (90.00)	-	36 (10.00)
Entrepreneurial activities			
Getting credit and inputs	300 (83.33)	28 (7.78)	32 (8.89)
Selection of animals	324 (90.00)	-	36 (10.00)
Purchasing of animals	324 (90.00)	-	36 (10.00)
Culling and disposal of animals	318 (88.33)	21 (5.83)	21 (5.83)
Fixing price to animals	324 (90.00)	-	36 (10.00)
Owning goat farming	242 (67.22)	18 (5.00)	100 (27.78)
Attending training/meeting/camp	279 (77.50)	27 (7.50)	56 (15.56)

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