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Benefits and constraints as perceived by rural women in backyard poultry farming in Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh

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Abstract

This study was conducted with the objective to identify the benefits and constraints of backyard poultry rearing as, perceived by selected 80 rural women of Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh. The result revealed that extra source of income was perceived as the major benefits of backyard poultry farming by 92.5 percent backyard poultry rearing rural women with rank first, followed by minimum investment (87.5%) rank second, easy to selling of egg and meat (81.25%) rank third, high price of eggs and meat (75.50%), nutrition for family (48.75%), easy to care of birds (43.75%) and early return (41.25%). In above finding, it is concluded that backyard poultry rearing rural women should be acquainted with the new technologies as well as the recommended package of practices to maximize the productivity and hatchability. Consequently these would be increase in the income. As for as constraints of backyard poultry are concerned attack by predators was the major constraint reported by 92.5 percent (rank I) rural women, followed by complains by neighbours (88.75%, II rank), spoilage of egg in summer (63.75%, III rank), unstable price (60.00%, IV rank), lack of breeding stock (52.5%, V rank) low productivity (43.75%), low hatchability (41.25%), lack of protection against diseases (41.25%), lack of adequate scavenging land and lack of family support. Predators are highly devastating factor to the backyard poultry in villages, at initial stage, so care should be taken at this stage.

Keywords: Backyard poultry, benefits, constraints, rural women

Introduction

Poultry farming has been practiced in India since the prehistoric times. The Indian red jungle fowl is the acknowledged ancestor of many modern day hybrid chickens. However, for millennia, poultry remained confined to the rural poor as a backyard venture. According to the 19th livestock census, total poultry population is 729.2 million in which backyard poultry contributed 29.8 percent. Desi fowl shared 28 percent in layer population. Total egg production of India is around 88139 million in which backyard poultry contributed is 21 percent of total egg production (Annual Report DAHDF 2016-17). The total meat production is estimated to be about 7.4 million tones and poultry contributed 47.32 percent of total meat production. The per capita availability of eggs was around 69 eggs per annum in 2016-17 (Annual Report DAHDF 2016-17). Backyard poultry keeping is practiced by majority of the poor and marginalized rural households all over India. These households rely on low cost backyard poultry rearing to supplement and enhance their livelihoods. It not only provides nutritional security but also reduces the livelihood vulnerability, and promotes gender equity (Ahuja and Sen, 2007) [2]. Backyard poultry rearing is good option to generate petty cash for house hold requirement in addition to provide balanced food with minimum inputs available in the rural areas. Feeding of the backyard poultry is made easy by using household wastes, farm products and green vegetation, besides free scavenging for waste grains and insects.

Women have been considered to be the predominant owners of rural poultry. Most women in the rural areas rear the indigenous types of domestic fowl in extensive system of poultry production. Backyard poultry production serves as a small scale business for generating income controlled by women. The enterprise provides regular income using little inputs and the production can be solely managed by women in the households. In addition to this, there are some hidden benefits which forces rural women to rear poultry as backyard venture despite of several constraints and impediments.

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Research Methodology

The present study was carried out in the purposively selected Banda and Hamirpur district. Banda and Hamirpur comprising eight and seven block, respectively, out of these, four blocks were selected purposively as they had more poultry population viz., Naraini and Tindwari from Banda and Gohand and Sarila from Hamirpur district. Further from each block, consolidated sampling frame was prepared. Twenty rural women from the each four sampling frames, rearing five to ten backyard poultry for last two years or more were selected. Thus 80 rural women were selected for the present study. Data was collected through pre-tested semi-structured interview schedule. The collected data were codified, tabulated, classified and further categorized for systematic statistical analysis. Major statistical tools used for analyzing data were frequency distribution, percentage and ranking order.

Result and Discussion

Benefits Perceived By Backyard Poultry Rearing Rural Women

Table 1 reveals that additional source of income was perceived the major benefit from backyard poultry farming by 92.50 percent backyard poultry rearing rural women with rank first, followed by minimum investment (87.5%) rank second, easy to selling of egg and live bird for meat (81.25%) rank third, high price of eggs and meat (75.50%) rank fourth, nutrition for family (48.75%) rank fifth, easy to rear poultry (43.75%) rank sixth and early return from poultry (41.25%) rank seventh. Gujit, (1994) ^[5]; Alders, (1996) ^[1]; Kitalyi and Mayer, (1998) ^[7] study revealed that family poultry production represents an appropriate system to contribute to feeding the fast growing human populations and to provide income to poor small farmers, especially women. Chickens can provide a good source of income to the villagers, particularly the poorest families with limited resources like land and capital.

Table 1: Distribution of rural women according to benefits of backyard poultry farming

Benefits	Hamirpur (n=40)	Banda (n=40)	Total (N=80)	Rank
Additional source of income	36 (90.00)	38 (95.00)	74 (92.50)	I
Minimum investment	35 (87.50)	35 (87.50)	70 (87.50)	II
Easy to selling of eggs & live birds	35 (87.50)	30 (75.00)	65 (81.25)	III
High price of eggs & live birds	32 (80.00)	30 (75.00)	62 (75.50)	IV
Nutrition for family	19 (47.50)	20 (50.00)	39 (48.75)	V
Easy to rear poultry	18 (45.00)	17 (42.50)	35 (43.75)	VI
Early return from poultry	16 (40.00)	17 (42.50)	33 (41.25)	VII

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage)

Constraints Perceived By Rural Women in Backyard Poultry Rearing

Table 2 reveals that attack by predator was the major constraint reported by 92.5 percent (rank I) rural women, followed by complaints by neighbours (88.75%, II rank), spoilage of egg in summer (63.75%, III rank), unstable price (60.00%,IV rank), lack of breeding stock (52.5%,V rank) low productivity (43.8%,VI rank), low hatchability (41.25%, VII rank), lack of protection against diseases (41.5%,VIII rank),

lack of adequate scavenging land (38.75%,IX rank) and lack of family support (2.5%,X rank). Chaturvedani *et al.* (2014) ^[4] and Rawat *et al.* (2014) reported similar findings who revealed that major constraint was attack by predators. Khan (2006) ^[6] also reported that the main constraints with the rural poultry rearers were high incidence of disease, attack of predator and lack of credit facility, lack of extension service and lack of sufficient scavenging land.

Table 2: Distribution of rural women according to perceived constraints in backyard poultry rearing

Constraints	Hamirpur (n=40)	Banda (n=40)	Total (N=80)	Rank
Attack by predators	38 (95.00)	36 (90.00)	74 (92.50)	I
Complaints by neighbour	36 (90.00)	35 (87.50)	71 (88.75)	II
Spoilage of eggs in summer	21 (52.50)	30 (75.00)	51 (63.75)	III
Unstable price	25 (62.5)	23 (57.5)	48 (60.00)	IV
Lack of breeding stock	20 (50.00)	22 (55.00)	42 (52.50)	V
Low productivity of village poultry	18 (45.00)	17 (42.50)	35 (43.75)	VI
Low hatchability	17 (42.50)	16 (40.00)	33(41.25)	VII
Lack of protection against disease	16 (40.00)	17 (42.50)	33 (41.25)	VIII
Lack of adequate scavenging area	14 (35.00)	17 (42.50)	31 (38.75)	IX
Lack of family support	02 (05.00)	00 (00.00)	02 (02.5)	X

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage)

Conclusion

Among rural women, backyard poultry is a handy business with low-cost initial investment, but high economic return along with help in removing malnutrition among the poor families. Rural women are generating income by selling of the chickens or their fresh eggs at high cost than the market eggs. The money goes into supplementing the families budget. They use backyard poultry as ATM in emergency by selling birds and get money. With many benefits, backyard poultry have some important constraints like predators, low

productivity of birds, low hatchability, lack of scientific knowledge, unstable price etc. Predators are highly devastating factor to the backyard poultry in villages, at initial stage, so care should be taken at this stage. The potentiality of indigenous birds in terms of egg production is low eggs/ bird/ year and meat production is also very less. However, the backyard poultry production can be easily boost up with improved breed of poultry and provide skill development training to the rural women for maximize production of meat and egg.

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