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Status of women dairy farmers in Sabarkantha district of Gujarat

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Abstract

Prevalled status of women dairy farmers in Sabarkantha district of Gujarat was studied by selecting 150 women farmers randomly covering all talukas. Desired information was collected by questionnaire was analyzed in SPSS 26 software. It revealed that majority women were studied upto secondary standard and were associated with agriculture and animal husbandry together. Mehsani breed of buffalo and Crossbred cow was main preference of women dairy farmers. Mean age of women dairy farmers was about 42 years. Average family members were 5.42. Among total 150 respondents 121 and 110 women have reared cows and buffaloes, respectively. Average numbers of cows were about 2.5 times more than buffaloes. Total average herd strength including cows and buffaloes were 7.03. Housing management practices used by women dairy farmers of SK district are showing that majority of respondents (75%) have pakka house with concrete floor located mostly in proximity to their dwellings. Concrete was mostly preferred. Majority of them were having manger and practically all farms were well ventilated. Thus, it can conclude that women in study area are possessing good number of cattle and buffaloes with good housing facility.

Keywords: Age, housing, floor type, land holding, socio economic, women dairy farmers

Introduction

Animal keeping by mixed farming enterprise is long back tradition of rural India. However, before independence livestock rearing was mostly practiced for manure production and to produce milk for their own consumption. After establishment of cooperative milk marketing channels the rural dairy farming is improving a great deal. Over and above proper marketing of milk support from government through various schemes have helped greatly to improve dairy husbandry and thus, productivity. Gujarat is an important state in milk production and marketing in India on cooperative dairy system. The livestock population in Gujarat has 27.03 millions in which 9.98 million cattle and 10.38 million buffaloes. Gujarat contributes around 13.56 million tons of milk to the total milk pool of India and per capita availability is 564 g/day. At present each and every districts of Gujarat has been covered by cooperative milk procurement channels. Among more than 20 cooperative districts dairy unions Amul, Sumul, Banas, Sabar, Sagar, Panchamrut, and Mother are well established famous dairies in Gujarat. The said dairies are providing health care, breeding and nutrition support to the dairy farmers. Productivity depends on prevailed feeding, management and healthcare practices. All such practices are mostly based on traditional knowledge of farmers that they have gained from their parents. Hence, there is vast variation in prevailing dairy management practices from caste to caste and region to region. Many modern technologies like imported semen, sex sorted semen, TMR machines, and fodder reaper with chopper, milking parlour, bulk milk cooler, milk replacers, calf starter etc are boon to the farmers. Many specialized dairy farms in north Gujarat are using them successfully (Gadhvi *et al.*, 2020a) [2]. Therefore, to improve the practice in particular region the knowledge regarding prevailed practice is required. The dairy farmers of Sabarkantha district of Gujarat are lucky as they have Sabar dairy. The district is located in north Gujarat and having semi-arid type climate. District is having seven talukas and among them three talukas is tribal dominating. Sabarkantha is doing well so far as livestock rearing concern. However, still there is lot of scope to improve the productivity and profitability from livestock keeping. Thus, Government of Gujarat has sanctioned head quarter of Kamdhenu University at Rajpur village in Sabarkantha district itself. Therefore, to develop

suitable strategies to improve profitability a pilot survey for women dairy farmers of the district was planned.

Materials and Methods

Prevailed status and animal husbandry practices among women dairy farmers in Sabarkantha district of Gujarat was studied by selecting 150 women farmers located in all seven talukas of district. Twenty each farm women was selected randomly from Idar, Prantij, Talod, Khedbrahma, Vijaynagar and Vadali; whereas 30 women were selected randomly from Himmatnagar taluka. Desired information was collected by questionnaire. The collected data were summarized and grouped. It was analyzed in SPSS 26 software. After performing normality test for dataset the χ^2 test was performed along with frequency distribution in nonparametric test in SPSS 26.

Results and Discussion

Socio economical and personal characteristics of women dairy farmers of Sabarkantha (SK) district is depicted in Table 1. Table showing that majority women were studied upto secondary standard. About 40% respondents were studied upto higher secondary level. However, only one woman was graduate. The education levels compared by chi square test revealed significant difference between selected women. Gadhvi *et al.* (2020a) [2] also revealed that mostly dairy farmers in north Gujarat were studied upto secondary level. Majority of farm women (93%) were associated with agriculture and animal husbandry together. The business employed by women were significant different. It is in accordance with Gadhvi *et al.* (2020a) [2]. The animal kept and breed preference parameters were also statistically significant. Majority (55%) respondents were keeping both cattle and buffaloes together. However, cow rearing was looked more in compare to buffalo rearing. Breed preference revealed that Mehsani breed of buffalo and Crossbred cow was main preference of women dairy farmers. Mehsani is good milch type native buffalo breed best suited to local hot climate. However, majority of respondents were having crossbred cows with view point of profit generation.

Table 1: Socio economical and personal characteristics of women dairy farmers of Sabarkantha district (n=150)

Parameter		n	%	χ^2 value
Education	Literate	4	3	150.9*
	Primary	13	9	
	Secondary	74	49	
	HSC	58	39	
	Graduation	1	1	
Business	Agri +AH	140	93	243.2*
	AH	7	5	
	Labour +AH	3	2	
Ani kept	Cattle	39	26	31.7*
	Buffalo	29	19	
	Both	82	55	
Buffalo Breeds	Mehsani	92	61	202.7*
	Banni	10	7	
	Mehsani +Banni	3	2	
	Others	5	3	
Cow breeds	Crossbred	106	71	160.4*
	Indigenous	8	5	
	Both	7	5	

Mean personal characteristics and herd strength of women dairy farmers is shown in Table 2. It shows that mean age of

women dairy farmers was about 42 years. It means majority of them were belongs to middle age group. Chaurasiya *et al.* (2016) [1] were also shown similar findings. The middle age group women are in generally accepting innovative technology than older groups. Hence, dairy farming in SK district is having good scope for improvement. Average family members were 5.42. It was observed that the most of families mostly lived with their parents and brothers together like joint family. The joint family is desirable as far as livestock rearing is concern. As the routine activities of livestock is scattered in all days of year. So the families who are associated with livestock farming can't leave their home all together. Livestock farming are preventing family members escape from home even to attend social customs particularly if they are living in small nuclear family with husband wife and children. It means large families with elders are preferred for livestock farming. Among total 150 respondents 121 and 110 women have reared cows and buffaloes, respectively. Average numbers of cows (6.45 heads) were about 2.5 times more than buffalo kept (2.50 heads). Total average herd strength including cows and buffaloes were 7.03. The herd size observed in present study was higher than previous findings (Prajapati *et al.*, 2016, Vekariya *et al.*, 2016) [5, 8].

Table 2: Mean personal characteristics and herd strength of women dairy farmers of Sabarkantha district (n=150)

Parameter	n	Mean \pm SEm
Age	150	41.99 \pm 0.74
Family members	150	5.42 \pm 0.15
Cows	121	6.45 \pm 1.19
Buffaloes	110	2.5 \pm 0.32
Total Herd Strength	150	7.03 \pm 1.1

Housing management practices used by women dairy farmers of SK district is given in Table 3. All subgroups of parameters were significant as per chi square test. Table showing that majority of respondents (75%) have pakka house to tie their animals which is significant from other housing methods like tree and paddock (8%), kachha house (15%) and no house (2%). Gadhvi *et al.* (2020b) [3] reported that houses of all dairy farms in north Gujarat was belonged to Pakka type with concrete floor, GI sheet roof and RCC pillars. Pilaniya *et al.* (2018) also reported that majority dairy farmers in Sabar milk shed area were having pakka shed; however, present study revealed further more numbers of farmers with pakka houses than said study. Majority of dairy farms sheds were located near to human dwelling. As it is very easy to manage, observe and protect animals when they are tied very near to houses. On other hand all the family members can help in day to day routine of livestock. Even children can play their role for feeding, watching during calving, shedding of placenta etc small but essential events. Now a day people don't like smell from animal houses, hence, it is scenario to shift animal houses away from human dwellings. Among floor employed by women dairy farmer concrete was mostly preferred. Concrete floor is easy to construct, durable and easy to clean, hence, it is having wider acceptability (Gadhvi *et al.*, 2020b) [3]. Pilaniya *et al.* (2018) [4] reported that about one third farmers were using pakka floor in rural area of three talukas of SK district itself. Hard floor may be predisposing factors for lameness with poor hock and hygiene scoring; hence, additional cost to buy rubber mat is seldom required particularly when crossbred cows were kept. Majority of them

were having manger and practically all farms were well ventilated. Pilaniya *et al.* (2018) [4] also reported that 68% animal houses were possessing manger. The livestock house was generally enough to fulfil the basic need of their livestock. Rathva *et al.* (2019) [6] revealed that the housing management practices in Gujarat were good as far as requirement and comfort of animal kept.

Table 3: Housing management practices used by women dairy farmers of Sabarkantha district (n=150)

Parameters		n	%	χ^2 value
House type	Pukka	112	75	202.7*
	Tree and Paddock	12	8	
	Kachha	23	15	
	No house	3	2	
Place of house	Near to own home	116	77	131.7*
	At farm	22	15	
	Other	12	8	
Floor type	CC	104	69	22.4*
	Other	46	31	
Manger	Yes	116	77	44.8*
	No	34	23	
Ventilation	Yes	148	99	142.1*
	No	2	1	

Conclusion

The women dairy farmers were young to middle aged. They were mostly educated upto secondary standard living in joint family. Crossbred cattle rearing were mostly employed by them. The livestock house possessed by them was mostly pakka with hygienic concrete floor. It can be concluded that women dairy farmers are well equipped with livestock and housing facility, thus, further improvement in livestock rearing by using modern concept is feasible.

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Conflict of Interest: Nil.

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