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Socio-economic and management features of Purgi goat and their contribution in rural livelihood security

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Abstract
The present study attempts to investigate the socio-economic and technical characteristics of Purgi goats and their husbandry practices in its home tract. Fifty Purgi goat breeders were randomly selected in eight villages and interviewed using pre-structured questionnaire. The data generated included socio-economic condition of the breeders, housing, breeding, feeding, watering, health care and other management practices. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The study revealed that most of the respondents belonged to the age group of 40-60 years and maximum breeders had education level of middle to matric standard. All the farmers belonged to schedule tribe (Muslims) community and were literate. The land holding (irrigated) size was in between 0-0.75 hectare with 96% of the breeders. About 72% of purgi breeders had experience of goat rearing and mean flock size was 26.96 with flock composition of 2.36 breeding buck, 16.39 does and 7.21 young ones. Purgi breeders had other livestock species also and mean herd/ flock size per household was 0.63, 3.58, 7.21and 10.51percent for local cattle, cross-bred cattle, sheep and back-yard poultry respectively. The mean total annual income from all sources of the breeders was Rs 1,42,134.0 and the income from goats only was Rs19,439.0 per year, whereas, the income per goat/year was Rs 939.24.Mostly houses were pucca with both open and close type. Animals were kept during night time only in the houses which are nearby or inside the dwelling house. Thus purgi goats are managed and maintained by are dual purpose (meat and fibre) type and play vital role in livelihood security of Kargil tribes.

Keywords: Kargil, Purgi goats, socio economic and technical characteristics

Introduction
Animal husbandry plays a pivotal role in the overall agricultural economy of the country because of its production potential through raising socio-economic status of the rural people. Livestock sector occupies an important place in terms of growth rate and thus in terms of national economy. Sheep and goats are important in subsistent agriculture on account of their unique ability to adapt and maintain themselves under harsh environment. Among the livestock population goats make an important contribution to the sustenance of small and marginal landholders and landless rural people by their contribution towards marketable commodities such as meat, milk, fibre and skin. It also plays a leading role in eradication of poverty in small farmers and landless laborers by self-employment. In fact, goat may constitute a 'living-bank' providing a cash buffer for landless, marginal farmers, unemployed youth, aged and physically handicapped persons and especially to women folk. Goat with its unique feature of providing maximum returns with minimum care and expenditure has made it the most popular livestock for the poorer sector of the society in India. Rearing of goats is a traditional vocation in Jammu & Kashmir. The tribals viz Bakerwals, Gaddies and Changpas have developed perfect professionalism in Sheep & Goat rearing. Being the source of their livelihood, they have become the saviors of goats over the centuries. Goats are the most widely distributed and adaptable domestic ungulate species. They are very important to the economy of the country for milk, meat and fibre. In India there are more than twenty different registered breeds of goat. In J&K, the goat population is 23,47,000 and the number of persons involved in goat farming business are 2,35,985, whereas number of goats per thousand household is 1062.Kargil is the second largest town in Ladakh after Leh, scattered over an area of 14,086 Sq. kms., having population of 1,43,388 and an average literacy rate of 74.49%. More than 90% of the population is engaged in animal husbandry activities. The goat population is 3.56 lakh in Ladakh and Kargil possesses 94,440 thousands of goats, out of which, about 80% shared by Purgi breed of goats (Safeer Alam *et al*. 2019) [13].

The Purgi breed of goat is small in size (adult's body weight 18.5-23.5 kg) with dull black & white coat colour and plays a vital role in livelihood support in the area. The breed is being used by the breeders/farmers for meat as well as fibre production and is known for the chevon having good market. The declining population of this goat may be due to socio-economic conditions of the breeders/farmers, social status and the management practices prevailing in the area. Hence it becomes necessary to have a comprehensive study of this breed. Further, J & K is rich in natural fodder resources in the form of pastures, orchards, aquatic vegetation etc. Despite, favorable conditions for sheep rearing the production potential of this sheep sector in J& K is far below to its optimum. The differences in socio-economic status (SES) of the livestock farmers and low genetic potential of livestock species reared by farmers may be among the factors responsible for lower production potential of livestock species reared in J&K. Roy *et al*. (2013) defined socio-economic status (SES) of an individual or a group as a measurement of his or their economic and social position in relation to others in the society. SEC has significant role in determining once access to resources and an enormous number of variables is used by researchers to determine socio-economic status (SES) of farmers. Accordingly, survey was undertaken in four CD flocks of Kargil district Viz; Chikran, Taisuru, Shargole and Sankoo to understand socio-economic profile of Kashmir Merino sheep farmers.

Material and Methods

The socio-economic study of randomly selected fifty purgi goats in eight villages of kargil district was done by pre-structured interview. Structured questionnaires were used to obtain information by personal interviewing the farmers. The data generated included: socio-economic characteristics of the breeders, housing, breeding, feeding, watering, health care and other management practices. The data collected were analyzed by descriptive statistics (percentage).

Results and Discussion

The result showed the influence of some socio-economic variable on Purgi goat production. The study revealed that most of the respondents belonged to the age group of 40-60 years and maximum breeders had education level of middle to matric standard. Hassan *et al*., (2015) [7] in Yankasa sheep and West African dwarf goat's farmers and their production constraints in lafia, Nigeria reported that the age range of more than 30 years was also more involved in rearing small ruminant followed by 20 – 30 years age group. This indicates the great potential that existed for improved production practices since people within this age ranges would be expected to be more receptive to new ideas and innovative (Ajala *et al.,* 2008) [3]. All the farmers belonged to schedule tribe (Muslims) community and were literate. Nipane *et al*., (2016) [8] reported that in socio-economic characteristics most of the respondents (34%) were educated up to primary followed by high school (22.28%) and middle school educated (15.42%). However, more than 10 per cent of the respondents possess higher secondary to graduate and above level education. Raghavan and Raja (2012) [10] and Baruwa (2013) [5] reported that in socio-economic characteristics 81.6% of the goat farmers were educated. The land holding (irrigated) size was in between 0-0.75 hectare with 96% of the breeders. About 72% of purgi breeders had experience of goat rearing and mean flock size was 26.96 with flock composition of 2.36 breeding buck, 16.39 does and 7.21 young ones. Purgi breeders had other livestock species also and mean herd/ flock size per household was found to be 0.63, 3.58, 7.21and 10.51percent for local cattle, cross-bred cattle, sheep and back-yard poultry respectively. The mean total annual income from all sources of the breeders was Rs 1,42,134/- which includes other sources(Rs 28,969.0), agriculture (Rs57,151.0) and livestock and (Rs 36,575.0) respectively. The income from goats only was Rs19,439.0 per year, whereas, the income per goat/year was Rs 939.24. Byaruhanga *et al*., (2014) [6] reported in socioeconomic study that most farmers (67%) earned less than UShs 150,000 from goat production, while only 6.1% of them had their annual income above UShs 400,000. Mostly houses are pucca with both open and close type. Animals are kept during night time only in the houses which are nearby or inside the dwelling house. Animals are maintained on semi-intensive feeding system and fed on an average 1.5 kg of greens/bhusa/dried alfa-alfa per goat per day especially during chilling winters when animals cannot be taken out. Oladele and Adenegun (1998) [9] and Adesehinwa and Okunlola (2000) [1] reported extensive system as the most common production practice in south western Nigeria. Ajala and Gefu (2003) [4] also reported that small ruminants were mostly managed under extensive system in northern Nigeria. Animals are fed lahori salt adlib and allowed to drink water of streams/ponds twice a day by almost all the farmers. Mating of animals is done by natural methods during September15-November15 (66.16%), kidding (70.25%) takes place during March-April with 97.33% single kidding. Animals are mostly treated by paravets followed veterinary assistant surgeons and owners by allopath and indigenous medicines respectively. Deworming is done twice in a year. The most common diseases in the area are contagious caprine pleuro pneumonia, Peste des petitis ruminants, foot and mouth disease, goat pox and foot rot in the area. The vaccinations are being practiced by the farmers on regular basis for infectious diseases. Adesehinwa *et al.,* (2004) [2] stated that, increase in cost of production of ruminant animals was attributable to additional costs incurred in transporting and treating sick animals, as well as cost of pest and disease control to prevent epidemic outbreak. Most respondents claimed that, input supplies such as drugs and feeds increased livestock production. Chukwuma (2012) reported that awareness about veterinary services is a step towards its access and utilization. Rather *et al*. (2020) [11] also reported similar management practices adopted by goat farmers for managing Kashir Goat in Kashmir valley.

Conclusion

From the result of the present study it is concluded that purgi goats are dual purpose (meat and fibre) type and play vital role in livelihood security of Kargil tribes. It is suggested that further breed improvement programme and its conservation may be taken up by the research system.

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