



Research Article

SOCIO-PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND COMMUNICATION SOURCES UTILIZATION PATTERN OF SMALL RUMINANT LIVESTOCK OWNERS (SRLO) IN COSTAL BELT OF WEST BENGAL

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Abstract: Small Ruminant Livestock Farming has been an integral part of many households in rural areas. The present study was planned and carried out among 140 respondents in four villages in costal belt (Sundarbans area) of South 24 Parganas district in West Bengal to find out the socio-personal profiles of the Small Ruminant Live Stock Owners (SRLO). They were predominantly most active age group (30-45 years), maximum owners were above primary level education, belonging to Hindu religion from Scheduled caste and General with nuclear family. They were marginal and small livestock holding with low annual income from small ruminant farming. Majority of SRLO were used farm publication in mass media, livestock owner from other villages, BLDO/Veterinary Officer and Panchayat personnel in personal cosmopolite communication and resident of the same village but other than neighbors in personal localite communication sources utilization in costal belt of South 24 Parganas district in the state of West Bengal.

Keywords: Socio-Personal, Small ruminant, Communication, Livestock, Coastal

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Introduction

Animal husbandry is a pivotal sector of the agricultural economy and small ruminant livestock (sheep and goat) plays an important role in animal husbandry sector as well as national economy in our country. Small ruminants farming is one of the most important subsidiary occupations by almost all farmers for generation after generation of primary sector rural employment together with creation of income opportunities. Poor farmers prefer small ruminant, because, they are highly prolific (goat > sheep) and farmers can easily earn money during lean period of agriculture or tied period of the crisis. In above context, the state of West Bengal has one of the best options of improved small ruminant livestock farming to increase the economic condition of rural people. The present study was conducted in Coastal saline belt (Sundarbans area) of South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal, India to estimate the Socio-Personal Characteristics & Communication Sources Utilization Pattern, which may influence the farming system of small ruminant livestock along with productivity.

Material and Methods

The study was conducted in costal belt (Sundarbans area) of South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal, India. Two blocks were selected randomly from costal belt of the district. From each block, two Gram Panchayats were selected considering highest number of small ruminant livestock population (Judgment sampling). In this process, Patharpratima, G-plot, Amlatali and Kumirmari Gram panchayats were selected. From each Gram Panchayat thirty five (35 Nos.) respondents were selected randomly with judgment sampling. In this process, 140 respondents were selected for the study. A Structured interview schedule was prepared, pre-tested and administered personally for the purpose of data collection. The data were collected, compiled and tabulated. Then the data were also categorised to further clarity, understanding and interpreted with calculation of percentage analysis.

Result and Discussion

In the present context, demographic and socio-personal profiles of the SRLO

included the age, gender, education, marital status, religion, caste, family type, categories of land holding, occupation, training, house type, social participation, heard size and income from small ruminant livestock farming. The data has been categorized under Costal belt in South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal. The study found that majority of the SRLO *i.e.* 53.6 percent were from the most active age group, whereas, 27.1 percent belonged to young age group and only a mere 19.3 percent hailed from the elder age group and had an age of over forty-five years. Nell (1998) [1] reported in his studies, that the younger small ruminant farmers tend to be less conservative and more likely to adopt external parasitological remedies. He further indicated that the adoption of internal parasite control technologies requires more experience, *i.e.*, age. The result shows that majority of the SRLO *i.e.*, 70.7 percent were females and 29.3 percent were male respondents. Mohan and Deoghare (2004) [2] showed that younger age with higher education were more efficient and keener to goat rearing. Raju *et al* (2006) [3] found in their study that the farmers were mostly middle aged with fodder cultivation, deworming and colostrums feeding in members of co-operative societies.

It was clear from the table, that majority of respondents *i.e.*, 28.6 percent was primary school education and only 15.0 percent were illiterate. It was further seen that, majority *i.e.*, 20.7 percent of SRLO was from middle school education in the study area, whereas, 12.1 percent SRLO was high school education and followed by 5.0 and 15.7 percent respondent was read only and can read and write education respectively. The study found that majority of (85.00%) small ruminant livestock owners were married and near 8.00 percent and 7.00 percent small ruminant livestock owners were widow/ widower and unmarried, respectively. A cursory look at this table revealed that majority *i.e.* 77.8 percent of the SRLO were Hindu followed by 8.6 percent Muslim and 13.6 percent Christian community respondent in the study.

[Table-1] revealed that, majority of the respondents' *i.e.*, 54.3 percent belongs to schedule Caste, 14.3 percent from Schedule tribe, 7.1 percent from OBC, and 24.3 percent belonged to general category respondents.

Table-1 Distribution of Demographic & Socio Personal characteristics of Small Ruminant Livestock owners (SRLO) in South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal

Characters	Category	South 24Pgs. (N=140)
Age	Young group (up to 30 years.)	27.1 (38)
	Most active group (30-45years.)	53.6 (75)
	Elder Group (above 45 years.)	19.3 (27)
Gender	Male	29.3 (41)
	Female	70.7 (99)
Education	Illiterate	15.0 (21)
	Can read only	5.0 (07)
	Can read and write	15.7 (22)
	Primary	28.6 (40)
	Middle school	20.7 (29)
	High school	12.1 (17)
	Graduate	2.9 (04)
Marital status	Unmarried	7.1 (10)
	Married	85.0 (119)
	Widow/ Widower	7.9 (11)
Religion	Hindu	77.8 (109)
	Muslim	8.6 (12)
	Christian	13.6 (19)
Caste	General	24.3 (34)
	Schedule caste	54.3 (76)
	Schedule tribe	14.3 (20)
	Other backward caste	7.1 (10)
Family type	Nuclear family	58.6 (82)
	Joint family	41.4 (58)
Categories	Landless	10.7 (15)
	Marginal	70.7 (99)
	Small	15.0 (21)
	Medium-Large	3.6 (5)
Occupation	Agricultural Labour	38.6 (54)
	Business	5.7 (08)
	Independent profession	31.4 (44)
	Cultivation	20.0 (28)
	Service	4.3 (06)
Training	Received	17.1 (24)
	Not received	82.9 (116)
House type	Katcha house	73.6 (103)
	Mixed house	24.3 (34)
	Pucca house	2.1 (3)
Social participation	No participation	54.3 (76)
	Member of one organization	35.7 (50)
	Member of > one-organization	6.5 (9)
	Office holder	3.6 (5)
Herd size	Small (2 to 8)	50.0 (70)
	Medium (9 to 15)	37.8 (53)
	Large (>15)	12.2 (17)
Income from small ruminant livestock farming	Low (Rs. 700 to ≤ 2200)	33.6 (47)
	Medium (Rs. 2201 to ≤ 3700)	45.7 (64)
	High (Rs. 3701 to ≤ 9600)	20.7 (29)

(Figures in parentheses indicate number of SRLO)

In the study area, near about 58.6 percent and 41.4 percent SRLO had nuclear and joint family. Nell (1998) reported that family size was a significant predictor in contributing positively to the partial adoption of antibiotics for small ruminant. The perusal of [Table-1] indicated that, majority (70.70%) of respondents belong to Marginal category of land holding followed by 15.0 percent from small category of land holding, 3.6 percent from medium-large category and 10.7 percent SRLO were found land less category SRLO, who have no land for cultivation or rearing small ruminant. It can also observe from [Table-1] that, 38.6 percent of the SRLO was agricultural labour as main occupation followed by a mere 5.7, 31.4, 20.0 and 4.3 percent were business, independent profession, cultivation and service respectively. The study area found that, only 17.1 percent SRLO received training about small ruminant farming or animal husbandry farming practices.

A perusal of [Table-1] showed that majority of the SRLO i.e. 73.6 percent, 24.3 percent and 2.1 percent were Katcha, mixed and Pucca houses, respectively. The table also showed that, near about 46.00 percent (35.7 percent member of one organization, 6.5 percent member of more than one organization and 3.6 percent office bearer) SRLO were involved in formal organization as member or office bearer to any organization. Majority of them i.e. near about 54.00 percent were not having any social participation. [Table-1] further showed that 50.0 percent of the

SRLO were small livestock holding (2-8 numbers), 37.8 percent were medium livestock holding (9-15 numbers) and only 12.9 percent were large number (>15 numbers) of livestock holding. The study also revealed that, majority (33.6 percent) of SRLO earning low income (Rs.700 to ≤ 2200 yearly), whereas 45.7 percent and 20.7 percent SRLO earning medium income (Rs. 2201 to ≤ 3700 and high income (Rs. 3701 to ≤ 9600), respectively from small ruminant livestock farming. The average annual income of SRLO was Rs. 3281.8 from small ruminant livestock farming.

The small ruminant livestock owners (SRLO) used their communication sources for better performance for their livestock farming system. The study from [Table-2] revealed that majority of SRLO used farm publication (55.7%) followed by Radio (51.4%) and Poster (34.3%) as mass media. Majority of them did not use educational film (98.6%) and television (85%) as mass media as information sources utilization in SRL farming practices. Chug (1986) [4] suggested that mass media exposure of the farmers was significantly influencing the extent of adoption of improved farming practices. In personal cosmopolite sources of information, 95.8 percent, 95.7 percent, 85.7 percent and 64.3 percent SRLO used to collect information from BLDO/VO, livestock owner of other villages, LDA and Panchayat Personnel respectively.

Table-2 Distribution of SRLO according to their information source utilization in South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal

A. Mass Media	Frequency Of Utilization (n=140)			
	Never (0)	Sometime (1)	Often (2)	Always (3)
Radio	48.6 (68)	47.1 (66)	4.3 (6)	0.0 (0)
Television	85.0 (119)	8.6 (12)	6.4 (9)	0.0 (0)
Education Film	98.6 (138)	1.4 (2)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
Farm Publication	44.3(62)	53.6 (75)	2.1 (3)	0.0 (0)
Poster	65.7 (92)	34.3 (48)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
Demonstration	76.4 (107)	23.6 (33)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
Exhibition	77.9 (109)	22.1(31)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
B. Personal cosmopolite				
Specialist from ARD Dept., GOWB	84.3(118)	15.7 (22)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
BLDO/ Veterinary Officer	4.2 (6)	48.6 (68)	33.6 (47)	13.6 (19)
L D A	13.6 (19)	49.3 (69)	36.4 (51)	0.0 (0)
Gram Sebak / Prani Bandhu	60.7 (85)	29.3 (41)	10.0 (14)	0.0 (0)
University Extension Personnel	98.6 (138)	1.4 (2)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
Panchayet Personnel	35.7 (50)	62.9 (88)	1.4 (2)	0.0 (0)
NGO	54.3 (76)	18.6 (26)	25.7 (36)	1.4 (2)
Bank personnel:	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
Input dealer	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
Livestock owner from other villages	4.3 (6)	72.1 (101)	23.6 (33)	0.0 (0)
C. Personal Localite				
Other Family Member	2.1 (3)	32.9 (46)	44.3 (62)	20.7 (29)
Resident of same village but other than neighbors	10.0 (14)	88.6 (124)	1.4 (2)	0.0 (0)
Relatives:	59.3 (83)	40.0 (56)	0.7 (1)	0.0 (0)
Friends	71.4 (100)	26.4 (37)	2.1 (3)	0.0 (0)
Neighbors:	1.4 (2)	45.7 (64)	37.1 (52)	15.7 (22)

(Figures in parentheses indicate number of SRLO)

In the personal localite sources of information, SRLO used to collect information from neighbour, other family members and residents of the same village for farming but other than neighbors were 98.6 percent, 98 percent and 90 percent, respectively.

The [Table-2] also showed the details frequency of information source utilization pattern of SRLO in the study area. Goswami (2000) [5] found that mass media and personal cosmopolite had positive and significant association with the improved A.H. practices in saline belt. Chinnadurai *et al* (2004) [6] pointed out that the socio- economic variables and mass media exposure showed positive and significant relationship with knowledge level of women involved in small ruminant farming [7].

Conclusion

Small Ruminant Livestock in India is important part of animal husbandry, providing much important subsidiary and gainful employment and thus raising the economic status of a large portion of rural population of the country.

Application of research: The study highlighted that Small Ruminant livestock production plays a significant role in rural people's life. Particularly in West Bengal small ruminant livestock are mainly confined to the weaker section of the society. Thus, proper policies and strategies are necessary for production by masses rather than mass production.

Research Category: Veterinary & Animal Husbandry Extension Education

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