

Constraints Faced by Tribal Dairy Farmers Regarding Dairy Farming Practices in Lohardaga District of Jharkhand



Sociology

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ABSTRACT

The present study was carried out to analyse the constraints faced by tribal dairy farmers in Lohardaga district of Jharkhand. The study was conducted in four villages from two blocks of Lohardaga district by personally interviewing 120 tribal respondents. Here, majority of the respondents stated their constraint as lack of credit facilities for purchase of feeds, fodders and mineral mixture (X=3.35), non-availability of diagnostic facilities (X=3.18), lack of artificial insemination facility (X=3.17), poor conception rate (X=3.09), non-availability of doctors (X=3.00), non-availability of essential medicines (X=2.90) and high cost of treatment (X=2.66) in dairy farming practices.

Introduction

India is a traditional home for about 645 tribal communities and they are distributed in almost all the states and union territories. The areas populated by tribals are remote and mostly underdeveloped. The tribal settlements are in isolated villages or hamlets (<http://en.wikipedia.org>). According to 2001 census, the population of tribals in the country is 84.32 million which accounts to 8.19% of the total population of the country. The tribal population of Jharkhand state is 7.08 million constituting 26.30% of the total population of the state. Among all states and union territories, Jharkhand ranks 6th in tribal population (Anonymous, 2001). In an agro based developing country natural resources provide basic livelihood support to rural people. Similarly in Jharkhand also, rural families are dependent on land, water, livestock and forests for generating employment and for their livelihood. Among the livestock, cattle and buffaloes play a significant role, because of their contribution to human nutrition. Jharkhand has a population of 76.59 lakh cattle and 13.43 lakh buffalo (Basic Animal Husbandry Statistics, 2006). Despite having huge bovine population the per capita availability of milk in Jharkhand is 140 gm against the national average of 265 gm. Also milch animal in this state gives an average of 1.59 litres a day against the national average of 3 litres (Shukla, 2008). However, there are numerous constraints that lead to non-adoption of recommended dairy farming practices. Keeping in view the above facts, the present study has been conducted to ascertain the constraints faced by tribal dairy farmers in adoption of recommended dairy farming practices.

Research Methodology

The present study was carried out in the Lohardaga district of Chotanagpur region, Jharkhand, as the district has 59% tribal population. Out of the five blocks of Lohardaga district: two blocks viz. Lohardaga and Senha were purposively selected as these blocks have comparatively larger population of tribal dairy farmers. From each block, two villages were randomly selected where dairying is predominantly practiced. Thirty respondents from each village were selected randomly which have at least one milch animal. Thus, a total of 120 tribal respondents were selected for the study. In the present study, constraints were conceptualised as impediments or obstacles faced in dairy farming practices. Constraints vary from individual to individual and region to region. In the course of study, first hand information with regard to constraints was collected and a well structured interview schedule was prepared to measure the constraints faced in breeding, feeding, management and health care. The constraints were collected on four point continuum i.e. regularly faced, frequently faced, rarely faced and not a constraint and score values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 were awarded respectively. Mean score was calculated by dividing total score given to a constraint by total number of respondents. On the basis of mean constraint score ranks were assigned to each item.

Results and Discussion

Constraints faced by tribal dairy farmers in breeding practices

Perusal of breeding constraints (Table-1) revealed that lack of artificial insemination facility (X=3.17) was a major constraint. Due to this deficit tribal respondents were not able to inseminate their animals on time. This is in agreement with the findings of Sharma and Makhija, 1991; Venkatasubramaniam, 1994; Nagaraju, 2001 who found that lack of A.I. facility was the main constraint faced by the tribal respondents. The next major constraint was poor conception rate (X=3.09), this might be because of the fact that, they were not feeding balanced ration to the animals and also there was lack of timely treatment. The above finding is in line with the findings of Sharma and Makhija, 1991; Verma, 1993, they reported that poor conception rate through A.I was stated as the major constraint. Lack of good quality semen (X=2.06), presence of scrub bulls (X=1.90), improper semen handling by field staff (X=1.89), unaware of heat symptoms (X=1.81) were another constraints felt by respondents, leading to poor conception of their animals. Presence of scrub bulls was expressed as the main constraint by dairy farmers as reported by Sharma and Makhija (1991) and Sohal (1995). The last rank was assigned to the constraint 'preference for natural service' (1.80) as they might be satisfied by natural service. Ram (1994) and Chugh (1995) also reported that preference for natural service was the major constraint.

Constraints faced by tribal dairy farmers in feeding practices

The constraints faced in feeding practices are presented in Table-2. The findings revealed that lack of credit facilities for purchase of feeds, fodders and mineral mixture (X=3.35) was major constraint faced by respondents. This might be due to their low income and high cost of feeds. Another major constraint was non-availability of land for green fodder cultivation (X=2.68) because most of the respondents were small, marginal farmers and landless agricultural labours. Pandey (1996) also reported that non-availability of land for fodder cultivation was the major constraint among the dairy farmers. Inadequate resources for balanced feeding (X=2.56) was assigned third rank as their resources were limited. Lack of information about balance feeding (X=2.50) was also important constraint as perceived by the respondents. This might be due to their low knowledge regarding dairy farming practices. This is in agreement with the finding of Kaur and Singh (2006) who reported that lack of knowledge about balanced ration and high cost of concentrate was the main constraint. Lack of irrigation facilities for green fodder cultivation (X=2.38) and poor quality of feeds and fodders (X=2.30) were the subsequent constraints faced by the respondents. Moreover, the respondents were satisfied with the quality of their feeds. These findings are similar to those recorded by Sharma and Singh, (2010); Nagaraju (2001).

Constraints faced in management and health care practices

Among management and health care practices (Table-3), non-availability of diagnostic facilities was the major constraint as indicated by mean constraint score (X=3.18). This might be attributed to distant location of veterinary inputs and lack of infra structural facilities in the villages. Lack of diagnostic facilities was also stated as the main constraint by the respondents (Sharma and Makhija, 1991). The second major constraint was non-availability of doctors (X=3.00). It might be due to the fact that, very few doctors were appointed in the respective blocks and also they had to cover larger areas. Non-availability of essential medicines (X=2.90) was the third constraint as the accessibility of medicines in the area was limited. Non-availability of veterinary medicines was also revealed as the main constraint by the dairy farmers (Kumar, 1995; Pandey, 1996; Ghosh and Ramchand, 2001). High cost of vaccines and medicines (2.66) was another constraint as perceived by the tribal dairy farmers. Because of their low income, they were not able to purchase vaccines and medicines in time. This is in line with the findings of Chugh (1995) and Balakrishna (1997) who also found that high cost of veterinary medicine was the major constraint. Lack of awareness of health care (X=2.33) was the fifth constraint as most of the dairy farmers were illiterate and they had no exposure to scientific dairy farming practices. Acharya (1990) also got the similar finding. Inadequate supply of vaccines (X=2.32) was also a constraint, as they did not get regular adequate supply of vaccines. Delayed treatment of sick animals (X=2.31) was another constraint as they were mostly using their traditional knowledge and also there was lack of availability of veterinary aid on time. Another constraint noticed were unhygienic condition of cattle shed (X=2.29) and poor housing of animals (X=2.00). This might be due to the fact that, the respondents were not aware of good hygienic practices and the houses had mostly soiled flooring and straw shed. No isolation of diseased animals (X=2.00) was the last constraint observed, as the tribal respondents had not enough space to segregate the diseased animals. The above findings were in agreement with the findings reported by Aulakh et al. (2010) who found that there is not enough space for isolating diseased animals.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that tribal dairy farming practices are being hindered by constraints in all the major areas of dairying i.e. breeding, feeding, management and health care. There is an inevitable need to focus these constraints and to evolve suitable technologies to overcome these limitations. There is an urgent need to simplify the procedures for availing credit and to obtain the credit at low interest for extensive and effective credit utilisation by the tribal dairy farmers. Diagnostic facilities should be provided in the tribal area by ensuring doctors availability. Medicines should be made available and there is a need to develop low cost treatment regimens. Timely artificial insemination facilities should be provided to the tribal dairy farmers which is the prime need and major factor deciding the dairy farming. Need based training programmes should be conducted to create awareness among tribal dairy farmers regarding scientific dairy farming practices and there by adoption of advanced dairy farming practices for the betterment of tribal dairy farmers.

Table 1
Constraints faced by tribal dairy farmers in breeding practices

S. No.	Constraints in breeding	Total score	Mean score (X)	Rank
1.	Lack of A.I facility	381	3.17	I

2.	Poor conception rate	371	3.09	II
3.	Lack of good quality semen	248	2.06	III
4.	Presence of scrub bulls	229	1.90	IV
5.	Improper semen handling by field staff	227	1.89	V
6.	Unaware of heat symptoms	218	1.81	VI
7.	Preference for natural service	216	1.80	VII

Table 2
Constraints faced by tribal dairy farmers in feeding practices

S. No.	Constraints in feeding	Total score	Mean score (X)	Rank
1.	Lack of credit facilities for purchase of feeds, fodders and mineral mixture	402	3.35	I
2.	Non-availability of land for green fodder cultivation	322	2.68	II
3.	Inadequate resources for balance feeding	308	2.56	III
4.	Lack of information about balance feeding	300	2.50	IV
5.	Lack of irrigation facilities for green fodder cultivation	286	2.38	V
6.	Poor quality of feeds and fodders	277	2.30	VI

Table 3
Constraints faced by tribal dairy farmers in management and health care practices

S. No.	Constraints in management and health care	Total score	Mean score (X)	Rank
1.	Non-availability of diagnostic facilities	382	3.18	I
2.	Non-availability of doctors	360	3.00	II
3.	Non-availability of essential medicines	349	2.90	III
4.	High cost of vaccines and medicines	320	2.66	IV
5.	Lack of awareness of health care	280	2.33	V
6.	Inadequate supply of vaccines	279	2.32	VI
7.	Delayed treatment of sick animals	278	2.31	VII
8.	Un-hygienic condition of cattle shed	275	2.29	VIII
9.	Poor housing of animals	272	2.26	IX
10.	No isolation of diseased animals	240	2.00	X

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