

Research  
Paper

## Promotion of goat rearer groups and study of its structure and function

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### ABSTRACT

Goat rearer groups are the groups promoted in similar lines with that of self help groups (SHGs). The groups were promoted considering the problems of the farmers in goat rearing practice due to their scattered settlement in the villages. Groups promoted belonged to below poverty line (BPL) category ,consisted members of all age group ranging from 24 -55 years, with 51 per cent illiterates. Majority had a medium family size of 4-7. Groups were conducting weekly meeting regularly with an attendance of 80-100 per cent.

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**Key words :** Varieties, Fertilizer level, *Sesamum indicum* L., Yield attributes

## INTRODUCTION

The livelihood in rural India mainly depends on agriculture through crop farming. The constraints due to low or irregular monsoon and lack of irrigation facilities have compelled the farmers of semi arid region to diversify from crop to livestock production to counter the risk of crop failure. Thus livestock production has become a main source of livelihood for farmers because livestock are more tolerant to harsh climatic conditions. The goats among other livestock species possess inherent characteristics to adjust under different climatic conditions. However, the productivity of goat is generally very poor. This is due to poor management practices and poor nutrition in particular. Lack of awareness and poor rate of adoption of livestock related technologies could be the reason due to scattered living of goat farmers in the villages. Thus there is a need for creating awareness on improved and sustainable goat rearing practices. Such effort could be effective only if the farmers organize themselves and extend their active participation through community organization.

Community Organization - is the process by which the social system of a community provides for integration and adaptation within the community. This is a process

which continues regardless of the work of community organizer whose functions are to initiate, nourish and develop this process (Ross and Lappin, 1967). Community organization of goat farmers consists of any or all methods by which local community groups organize to promote and carry out any and all types of projects which will improve the life and work of goat farmers, families and the community as a whole. The objective of the present study is to motivate the goat farmers to organize themselves into livestock interest groups (LIGs) and adopt improved goat production practices and was conducted under the support and funding from NAIP through a project entitled '*Livelihood security through resource and entrepreneurship management in Bidar District*'.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was implemented in clusters of 3 villages each in 2 taluks (Aurad and Humnabad) of Bidar district in Karnataka *i.e.*, Ganganbeed, Ganeshpur and Aknapur of Aurad taluk and Alipur, Devgiri and Polakpalli of Humnabad taluk. The major livelihood activities of these villages were agriculture, livestock rearing and wage labour. The villages selected were remote villages, some do not

have the basic infrastructure like the roads, schools, markets and hospitals. The literacy levels in these villages were low. There has been a huge fodder and drinking water scarcity in summer.

The insight of the village was gathered with the active participation of the villagers and the village leaders. The local institutions provided all the support for the analysis of the social system, selection of the members and also provided their office space for meetings and training.

The members selected for the groups belonged to below poverty line (BPL), owning a minimum of 2 goats and preference was given to women especially divorced women, families affected with drunkards and widows. A group of 10 members owning a total of around 30-40 goats were promoted in each of the study villages with similar guidelines of that of SHGs. Certain variables were accounted for studying the structure of the group like the number of members in the group, economic status of the group members and literacy rate of the members. Selection of the leader of the group, attendance in the group, meetings conducted, lending of the money and repayment criteria and the record keeping were the variables for assessing the functioning of the group. The duration of the study was over a period of six months. Weekly and monthly meetings were conducted to assess the functioning of the groups. The data were recorded through participant observation, focused group discussion, key informant techniques were used as per the necessity. The collected data were subjected to simple statistical tools like mean, median, mode, percentage, standard deviation, range, frequency etc as per necessity.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results obtained from the present study have been presented in detail as under:

### Communities reached:

Below poverty line farmers including both men and women were promoted in the six villages into six livestock interest groups. Though emphasis was given to women, two LIGs (Aknapur and Alipur) were promoted with men members due to men dominance in these villages. Totally 60 households were involved directly and many more households were reached through meetings and camps.

### Rapport with the villagers:

The journey of our study in the villages started along with the NAIP team by informal meetings, discussions over tea with villagers but the study evolved and took shape with the active participation of the village elders and the

leaders. The research scholar also stayed at the villages during nights and dinner was arranged by the villagers. Also the integration of the animal health camps in the study became a component for winning the peoples' confidence and building up the rapport.

### Qualitative indicators:

The wealth of traditional knowledge across different communities and age groups ensured the "sum of whole" which was greater than the individual pieces of information. The community got access to improvised feeding practices through the on farm trials conducted. Peoples self respect and dignity in their own social system enhanced significantly. Many members were inspired to adopt some of the practices permanently into their livelihoods. Scientific implementation, documentation and monitoring served as challenge about the biases and myths of the practices. The integration of the animal health camps showed the importance of de-worming and vaccination and their effect on health and production. The outcomes of the study enabled a positive shift in the attitude of the members.

### Quantitative indicators:

#### *Profile of the members of goat rearer groups:*

The distribution of members according to age is presented in Table 1. Mean age of the members of the group was found to be 39.5 years. Majority of the members belonged to upper middle age group and the middle age. This was because of the interest and wide experiences of the upper middle age and middle age group people in order to enhance the productivity and create sustainable livelihoods.

Fifty per cent of the members of the groups were illiterate as presented in Table 2. But, the perceptible observation made was that the literates were the initiators of all the activities of the group. It was clearly evident that the literates were dominating the group. The literate upper middle age and middle age people were the decision makers for most of the activities. Among the illiterates, most of the families were Marathi speaking. But, this communication problem was eradicated by the decision makers who consolidated the information from Kannada to Marathi which helped the dissemination of the knowledge to all the members. The results are in confirmation of the findings of Singh (1997) and Rangi *et al.* (2002) and Gopala (2009).

The family size of the members of group ranged from 5 to 7 members (Table 1). To take care of the family, consistent source of income was required and people had to diversify their income sources through improvised goat

rearing in addition to agriculture labour. This fact could have driven the large families for their involvement in the groups. The results are in confirmation of the findings of Singh and Kunzroo (1985), Singh (1997), Gangil and Dabas (2005), Singh and Ushakumari (2007) and Gopala (2009).

The occupation of majority of members was agriculture labour followed by animal husbandry (Table 1). As all the members of the group were landless, they used to engage in agricultural labour and other works for their income to meet the expenses of the family. The results are in line with the findings of Reijntes *et al.* (1992) who stated that normally small households also attach high value to an even distribution of production over time in order to secure year round needs and make effective use of the available labour resources. Aryal (1995) reported that poverty in rural Nepal is due to small size of land holding. The results are also similar to the findings of Singh and Kunzroo (1985), Rangi *et al.* (2002), Singh and Ushakumari (2007) and Gopala (2009).

All the members of the group were landless (Table 1). They were engaged in labour activities for their

livelihood. The results are in line with the findings of Reijntes *et al.* (1992) who stated that normally small households also attach high value to an even distribution of production over time in order to secure year round needs and make effective use of the available labour resources.

The members possessed goats like the local bidri goat along with the introduced osmanabadi breed of goat (through NAIP as a part of study). There is a positive relationship between employment and income earned in any activity. Though majority of farmers were engaged in agriculture labour, the possession of goats was equally good as in Table 1. Almost 84 per cent of the members possessed 6 or more productive goats and had better income derived from the sale of kids and also through the sale of goats in critical times. The results are in line with the findings of Veeranna and Jawali (2000), Meher (2006), Kalached and Ubale (2007) and Shukla *et al.* (2008), who have stated that SHG based microfinance has better outreach and positive impact on poverty, annual flock returns from goat rearing comes to Rs.35660/- from small flock sized group, and income from crops was 17.2 per cent and from livestock it was 31.7 per cent of total income obtained in arid zone of Rajasthan.

**Table 1: Profile of the members of group**

Variable	Category	Frequency (n=60)	Percentage
Age	Young age (18-30)	6	10
X = 39.5	Middle age (30-40)	22	36.66
Range: 24-55	Upper middle age (40-50)	28	46.66
	Old age (51 or above)	04	06.67
Family size	6 to 7 members	27	45
	5 members	22	36.66
	2 to 4 members	11	18.34
Occupation	Agriculture labour	48	80
	Animal husbandry	8	13.33
	Other	4	6.67
Possession of goats	7 or more	21	35
	5 to 6	29	48.33
	2 to 4	10	16.67

### Structure and function of the promoted groups:

Each group was composed of ten members (Table 3). This is in confirmation of SHG and its norms, but it is in contrary to the findings of Kumaran (2002), Samuel *et al.* (2007), where in, the average no of members in SHG ranges from 13–15. The groups from Ganganbeed, Ganeshpur, Polakpalli, Devgiri Tanda composed of women members and Aknapur and Alipur with men members. The results of the study are in line with the findings of Kumaran (2002) and Suryakanthi and Subramani (2006) who reported that men SHGs can certainly reap the same advantage as those reaped by women SHGs and it will be a good idea to have mixed group of men and women to compliment the disadvantages of unisex.

All the six groups were conducting meetings regularly on a fixed day of every month. Attendance in the four of

**Table 2: Educational characterization of the group**

Variable	Category	Frequency (n=60)	Category				Percentage
			Y	M	U	O	
Education	No schooling/ Illiterate	31	01	12	15	03	51.67
Range: Illiterate - college	Primary school	16	02	03	10	01	26.66
	Middle school	10	01	06	03	00	16.67
	High school	03	02	01	00	00	5.00
	College	00	00	00	00	00	0.00

Y- Young age, M- Middle age, U- Upper middle age, O- Old age

**Table 3: Structure and function of the group**

Name of village	Name of goat rearers group	Group members	Group strength	Attendance of members	Saving per month
Aknapur	Laxmi goat rearers group	Men	10	8-10 (80-100)	50
Ganganbeed	Balumama goat rearers group	Women	10	10 (100)	50
Ganeshpur	Jai bhavani goat rearers group	Women	10	8-10 (80-100)	50
Devagiri tanda	Shrilaxmi goat rearers group	Women	10	8-10 (80-100)	50
Aleepur	Marakamma goat rearers group	Men	10	8-10 (80-100)	50
Polakapalli	Narasingh goat rearers group	Women	10	9-10 (90-100)	50

six groups was about 80-100 per cent, one group with 100 per cent and 90-100 per cent in the other. The findings with respect to frequency of meetings are in contrary with the findings of Kumaran (2002) and Samuel *et al.* (2007), who observed that 95-96 per cent of the meetings were conducted weekly which is indispensable to maintain frequent contact with members to discuss about activities, carry out transactions and contributions of their savings. All the six groups conducted meetings usually in community halls or temples. One or two remained absent due to committed works. Usually they were unable to attend the meetings on the days when they had to go to market, when they fall ill or when away from home. The meetings were generally conducted in evening hours as it was convenient for everyone. An amount of Rs 50 was fixed as savings from each member every month. During the meetings there was exchange of knowledge and practices. As the study was combined with nutrition trials, the community was interested in observing the weight gain of kids and the dose. They realized that the weight gain of kids supplemented with minerals was significantly higher than other goats in villages. In the meeting, the members arrived at a consensus that the creation of common water facility in summer would be useful due to water scarcity. The community also agreed that the monthly savings done would be effectively used for lending the loan and purchase of concentrate and minerals in bulk. Efforts were also made by the community to access animal health services in terms of vaccination and de-worming from the nearby veterinary dispensary.

#### **Opportunities for replication and recommendations:**

The study ensured the complete participation and involvement of the local communities. The scientific methods adopted have shown remarkable findings, especially regarding the nutritive value of minerals and vaccination and de-worming in goats. The research outcomes have enabled a positive shift in the attitude of the farmers towards improvised and scientific practices. The concerted efforts by the groups, financial management

and access to services can lead to revitalization of the livelihood and the collective effort can result in positive changes. This experience shows that the community has been empowered to take control over their decisions best suited. Organizations working for livestock development such as animal husbandry department and NGOs should focus on participatory approach and decision making at the community level rather than a top down imposition of class room knowledge.

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