

Research Note:

A study on availability of underutilized animal fibre resource in different zones of Rajasthan

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted in Zone I and Zone II of Rajasthan state were selected to collect data on animal based fibres, as in these zones, goat and sheep rearing are the main occupation of respondents along with farming of staple crops. The results revealed that Goat and sheep rearing is main occupation of the rebari community. Shearing was done twice in a year. The fibres were sold at the rate of Rs. 5-10/- per kg of goat fibers and Rs. 10-20/- per kg. of sheep fibers. All the respondents did spinning with traditional method. The wool is mainly utilized in the carpet manufacturing units, felt making units and a large quantity of wool produced is supplied to other states. Assan/Mats, Hand bag, Carpet, Cart bag, Ropes and Cot-weaving were the common products made by the respondents

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Key words : Goat hairs, Kaat, Artisans

Rajasthan, the state of deserts is in the west part of India. Areawise, Rajasthan is the second largest state of India with an area of 3,42,239 sq. km. In India, Rajasthan stands first in wool production. Besides Kashmir, India's Best wool is provided by sheep breed like-Chokhla, Magra, Marwari, Sonadi, Jaisalmeri, etc. sheep rearing practice is more common in Jaiselmar, Jodhpur, Barmer, Nagore, Pali, Jalore and Bikaner district of state.

Sheep plays a crucial role in economical infrastructure of Rajasthan. Asia's largest wool market contributing to the spinning of wool worth Rs. 40 lakhs per day and that of one Arab per year, is situated in the Bikaner city of Rajasthan.

Sheep population in Rajasthan is 23 per cent of overall India, Goat population in Rajasthan is 17 per cent of population in India. Sirohi breed is the best breed of Rajasthan and is found in Sirohi, Pali, Jodhpur, Udaipur and Chittorgarh areas of Rajasthan.

With such resources available at present in rural areas, the farm families can produce many varieties of eco-friendly products that have potential market. Sustainability in production of these products is ensured as the products can be made utilizing animal based resources and can become the potential source if technologies for proper extraction and processing are

developed. Value addition to the products that have potential market will help not only to provide livelihood security to the rural people but also improve exports from the country. With the above concept, the present study was carried out.

Keeping in view the utility of animal based fibers, the survey was conducted by pre tested interview schedule to generate gender based data on availability of underutilized animal fibre resource and prevalence of technologies of fibre procesing and product development in the Rajasthan state. Total sample size of the survey was 100 respondents. The sample distribution comprised of 35 subjects of rearing animals, 30 for spinning of fibres and 35 for product making.

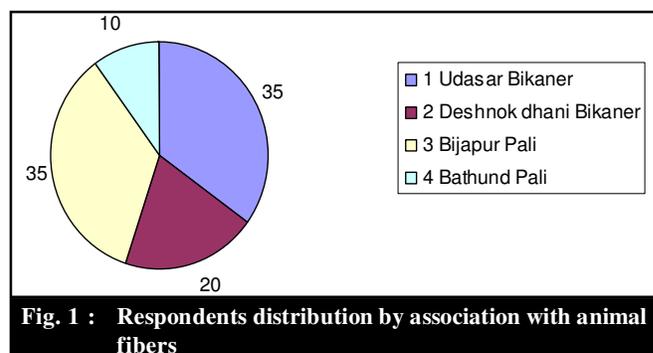


Fig. 1 : Respondents distribution by association with animal fibers

The findings obtained from the present investigation are presented below:

Profile of the respondents:

Primary occupation of the respondents was sheep / goat rearing and durrie weaving. Farming and labour were the secondary occupation of the respondents. 80 per cent respondents were male and remaining respondents were female in the age range of 31-40 years and 41-50 years. Most of the respondents were educated up to middle class and few respondents were illiterate. Half of the respondents belonged to middle income group (Rs. 3000-4999 /-), 30 per cent respondents having lower middle income (Rs. 1500-2999/-) and remaining 20 per cent respondents were having low income (Rs. 5000-6999/-).

Mainly desi goat and magra breed of sheep were reared by respondents. Common shearing time of goat and sheep was March-April (1st clipping) and 2nd Sept.-Oct. (2nd clipping). All the respondents did shearing manually using instrument "Kaat"

The fibres were sold at the rate of Rs 5-10 /- per kg of goat fibers and Rs. 10-20 /- per kg. of sheep fibers as reported by 57 per cent and 43 per cent respondents respectively. 50 per cent respondents, providing employment for other workers in case of shearing and



Fig. 2 : "Kaat", the shearing instrument

rearing.

Basically the respondents belonged to Rebari community. Sheep and goat rearing is their family occupation and they indulged in it irrespective of getting profit or loss in rearing animals and selling fibres. It was observed at the time of data collection that shearing of animals was one of the major activity in the Rebari community and all the Rebari families were not efficient

Table 1 : Type of animal based fibres available (N=35)

Sr. No.	Fibres	Varieties	Respondents keeping reared animal		Respondents	Average Population of the fibre producing animals	Average Yield/ animal	Common shearing time (Season/month)
			No.	(%)				
1.	Goat hairs		20	57.14	-	107	0.70	March-April (1 st clipping)
	Sheep hair	Magra	15	42.86	-	112	0.76	Sept.- Oct. (2 nd clipping)

Table 2 : Distribution of respondents according to price per Kg of animal fibre (N=35)

Sr. No.	Price per kg of fibre	Respondents rearing goat		Respondents rearing sheep		Total respondents
		No.	(%)	No.	(%)	
1.	* 5-10/-	20	57.14			20
2.	10-15/-			10	28.57	10
3.	15-20/-			5	14.29	5

Table 3 : Distribution of respondents according to different problems faced in fibre processing (N=35)

Sr. No.	Nature of problems	Respondents rearing goat		Respondents rearing sheep		Total respondents
		No.	(%)	No.	(%)	
1.	Lack of financial assistance	20	57.14	15	42.86	35
2.	Availability of raw materials	-	-	-	-	-
3.	Problem with the machines used for shearing	9	25.71	7	20.00	16
4.	Lack of technical expertise	20	57.14	15	42.86	35
5.	Lack of skilled labour	-	-	-	-	-
6.	Lack of demand	-	-	-	-	-
7.	Any other	-	-	-	-	-

Table 4 : Distribution of respondents according to problems in selling the fibre (N=35)

Sr. No.	Type of problem	Respondents growing fibre goat		Respondents growing fibre sheep		Total respondents
		No.	(%)	No.	(%)	
1.	Difficulty in transportation	20	57.14	15	42.86	35
2.	Difficulty in marketing	20	57.14	15	42.86	35
3.	High commissions of the middle man	16	45.71	10	28.57	26
4.	Any other	-	-	--	-	-

Table 5 : Distribution of respondents according to production per day (N=30)

Sr. No.	Production per day in kg.	Respondents dealing with goat hairs (20)		Respondents dealing with sheep fibres (10)		Total respondents
		No.	(%)	No.	(%)	
1.	½ kg	13	43.33	2	6.67	15
2.	1 kg	7	23.33	5	16.67	12
3.	1 ½ kg	-	-	3	10	3
4.	2 kg	-	-	-	-	-
5.	2 ½ kg	-	-	-	-	-
6.	3 kg	-	-	-	-	-

Table 6 : Distribution of respondents according to price per kg of yarn (N=30)

Sr. No.	Price per kg. yarn	Respondents dealing with goat hairs		Respondents dealing with sheep fibres		Total respondents
		No.	(%)	No.	(%)	
1.	10-20 /-	20	66.66	-	-	20
2.	20-30 /-	-	-	2	6.67	2
3.	30-40 /-	-	-	6	20.00	6
4.	40-50 /-	-	-	2	6.67	2

in shearing, hence they invite the “special people” for this task. Since most of the the Rebari families belonged to low income group and not well to do making arrangement of food creates extra burden on them.

Lack of financial assistance and lack of technical expertise were the main problems faced by 57 per cent respondents in case of goat fibre processing and 43 per cent respondents in case of sheep fiber processing. All the respondents also faced the problem in marketing the fibres due to difficulty in transportation. Half of the respondents also reported the problem of high commissions of the middle man.

All the respondents did spinning with traditional method. About ½ to 1 0 kg. of yarn was produced per day as reported by majority of the respondents. The yarns were sold at the rate Rs 10-20/-per Kg for goat as reported by 67 per cent respondents and sheep yarn at the rate of Rs. 20 to50/- according to yarn quality. ‘Charkha’ was used for mechanical spinning and ‘Dhera’ used for manual spinning. Monthly expenditure on raw material was found Rs.20/- to 50/- for goat and sheep fiber and monthly expenditure on transport was Rs.10-

**Fig. 3 : Manual spinning technique with “Dhera”**

20/-. All of the respondents took help from their family members.

For selling the goat yarns, 20 per cent respondents approached the cooperative societies, 14 per cent to govt. agencies and 33 per cent approached to private

Table 7 : Distribution of respondents according to the agencies they approach for sale (N=30)

Sr. No.	Agency for selling the yarns	Respondents dealing with goat hairs		Respondents dealing with sheep fibres		Total respondents
		No.	(%)	No.	(%)	
1.	Cooperative societies	6	20	7	23.34	13
2.	Govt. agencies	4	13.33	3	10	7
3.	Private organizations/ N	10	33.33	-	-	10
4.	Individuals	-	-	-	-	-
5.	Shops	-	-	-	-	-
6.	Exhibitions	-	-	-	-	-
7.	Weekly markets	-	-	-	-	-

Table 8 : Distribution of respondents based on motifs and design used for making the products (N=35)

Sr. No.	Type of design	Respondents dealing with goat hairs		Respondents dealing with sheep fibres		Total respondents
		No.	(%)	No.	(%)	
1.	Traditional	15	42.86	-	-	15
2.	Own	7	20	-	-	7
3.	Conventional	-	-	-	-	-
4.	Modern	-	-	-	-	-
5.	On order	13	37.14	-	-	13

organization / NGO. For selling the sheep yarn 23 per cent respondents approached to co-operative societies and 10 per cent respondents to govt. agencies. All the respondents reported several problems in making yarns. These problems were- lack of financial assistance, availability of raw material and lack of demand.

Regarding association with products, the artisans interviewed dealt with only goat hair fibres and yarns for developing a variety of products. Since dyeing activity was not taken up by them, the artisans preferred assorted colours of goat hairs such as- black, brown, grey, white for creating colour variation in their products. Traditional motifs were used by 43 per cent respondents, own designs or motifs by 20 per cent respondents and 37 per cent respondents used motifs or designs on order for making the products. Aasan / Mats, Hand bag, Carpet, Cart bag, Rope, Dharrie and Cot were the common products made by the respondents.

A large number of respondents (57 per cent) were making products using off loom techniques. In off-loom techniques braiding, twisting and macramé were used. When asked about production per day, it was found that 2-3 Aasan / Mats was being prepared per day and in case of carpets and durries 3 sq.ft / Day was woven. Majority of the respondents approach to monthly markets for selling the products. 25 per cent respondents approach to individuals, 15 per cent to exhibitions, 20 per cent to co-operatives societies and 5 per cent respondents approach to shops for selling the products.

**Fig. 4 : Goat hair carpet**

Regarding selling of products, it was revealed by them that 2-3 carpet of different sizes and 5-7 Aasan were sold in a month. Lack of demand was the major problem in product making, and difficulty in marketing and high commission of middle man was problems in selling the products as reported by cent per cent respondents.

From the above findings it can be inferred that the respondents which are associated with the animal fibers utilized them locally in the Cottage sector for manufacturing blankets, ropes, cots etc. being coarser fibers. The major problems felt were lack of demand, financial assistance, technical expertise and high

Table 9 : Distribution of respondents according to the off-loom techniques that they are engaged in (N=20)

Sr. No.	Off-loom technique	Respondents dealing with goat hairs		Respondents dealing with sheep fibres		Respondents growing fibre 3		Total respondents
		No.	(%)	No.	(%)	No.	(%)	
1.	Braiding	5	14.28					5
2.	Twisting	10	28.58					10
3.	Macramé	5	14.28					5
4.	Nail weaving	-	-					-
5.	Lace making	-	-	N.A.		N.A.		-
6.	Knitting	-	-					-
7.	Finger weaving	-	-					-
8.	Needle weaving	-	-					-
9.	Quilting	-	-					-
10.	Any other	-	-					-

Table 10 : Distribution of respondents according to different problems faced in product making (N=35)

Sr. No.	Nature of problems	Respondents dealing with goat hairs		Respondents dealing with sheep fibres		Total respondents
		No.	(%)	No.	(%)	
1.	Lack of financial assistance	10	28.57	-	-	10
2.	Availability of raw materials	-	-	-	-	-
3.	Problem with the machines used for extraction	-	-	-	-	-
4.	Lack of technical expertise	13	37.14	-	-	13
5.	Lack of skilled labour	12	34.14	-	-	12
6.	Lack of demand	35	100	-	-	35
7.	Any other	-	-	-	-	-

commissions of the middle man in fiber processing and marketing of the products.

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