



# International Journal of Social Sciences and Management

A Rapid Publishing Journal

ISSN 2091-2986



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Vol-2(2) April, 2015



Impact factor\*: 3.389

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Research Article

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN DECISION MAKING IN GOAT REARING IN  
NADIA DISTRICT OF WEST BENGAL

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**Abstract**

The present research work was done in Nadia district in the state of West Bengal during January, 2011 to December, 2013. From the study revealed that women were responsible for the tasks like taking the animals for grazing, fodder collection, chaffing and storage of fodder etc. Almost entire activities, so far as washing and cleaning of goat sheds and feeding of goats, were being performed by the women. Results indicated that the rural women participation in five blocks in breeding activities was found to be minor activities due to social mores and taboos in society. Analysis of the data revealed that women participation in health care activities was found to be minor activities due to lack knowledge regarding health care activities. *The women in their late middle and old age actively participated in health care as they had learnt the things by seeing and out of experience. Most of the respondents interviewed were of the view that they require lot of training and knowledge with regard to the health care aspects.* From the study it was seen that no women take decision without the permission of their spouse for selling the animals.

**Key words:** Women goat farmer; feeding; management; breeding; health care; marketing

**Introduction**

India is rich in goat population (16.7% of world share) and its genetic biodiversity (FAO, 2010). On the other hand, the state of West Bengal has the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest goat population (150.69 lakh, *All India Livestock Census, 18th, 2007*) in the country (with 10.7% of the country's share). In rural areas goat keeping generates employment at the rate of 4.2% per annum (Dhara *et al.*, 2008). Goats are considered as the fixed deposits for the poorest of the poor supplying fund as and when necessary by virtue of their ready market demand (Sahoo *et al.*, 2004). The role of women in goat keeping is very significant in the rural families and goat is the most important means through which rural women are able to contribute meaningfully to the cash needs for her and their family members. Keeping in view of its association "*a front line demonstration on feeding and housing management systems of goat rearing*" is being initiated by Nadia Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Bidhan Chandra Krishi Viswavidyalaya, Gayeshpur, Nadia with specific objective to assess the participation and decision making of rural women in goat rearing activities.

**Materials and methods**

The present research work was done in Nadia district in the state of West Bengal during January, 2011 to December, 2013. *The district Nadia is selected purposively. It lies*

*between 22°52'30" and 24°05'40" parallels of North latitudes and 22°08'10" and 88°48'15" meridians of East Longitudes. One village of each of the five blocks has been considered for this study. From each of the selected villages, 25 women goat keepers have been selected randomly. In this way 125 women goat keepers have been selected from five villages of the five blocks which have been constituted the sample of the present study. The climate of Nadia district is characterized by an oppressive hot summer, high humidity all the year round and well distributed rainfall (annual average rainfall 1419 mm). Average daily maximum temperature is 31.8°C, and minimum temperature is 21.3°C during the period of study. Humidity is high throughout the year, average being 61.5% (minimum) to 92.9% (maximum). The study area is located in hot-humid zone having three distinct seasons, viz., summer (March to June), monsoon (July to October) and winter (November to February). A pilot study has been carried out, and accordingly a structured interview schedule has been constructed. The data has been collected through face-to-face interview and by direct observation method. Data pertaining to women goat farmers' participation in decision making; viz., feeding, management, breeding, health care and marketing were recorded. Data were analyzed following the standard statistical methods (Snedecor and Cochran, 1967).*

## Results and Discussion

### *Distribution of the women on the basis of their participation in goat rearing in five blocks of Nadia district of West Bengal*

Distribution of the women on the basis of their participation in goat rearing in five blocks of Nadia district of West Bengal is presented in Table 1.

#### **Haringhata Block**

Analysis of the data revealed that women members of farmers' family played a major role in feeding (72 per cent) and management (64 per cent) in the rearing of goats in Haringhata Block of Nadia district of West Bengal. Results indicated that 28 per cent of farm women were actively involved in breeding of animals. The study revealed that 20 per cent rural women were engaged in health care of animals. In the study area only 8 per cent women members were involved in marketing regarding selling or purchasing of goats (Table 1).

#### **Chakdah Block**

Analysis of the data revealed that women members of farmers' family played a major role in feeding (84 per cent) and management (68 per cent) in the rearing of goats in Chakdah Block of Nadia district of West Bengal. Results indicated that 24 per cent of farm women were actively involved in breeding of animals. The study revealed that 16

per cent rural women were engaged in health care of animals. In the study area only 12 per cent women members were involved in marketing regarding selling or purchasing of goats (Table 1).

#### **Ranaghat-I Block**

Analysis of the data revealed that women members of farmers' family played a major role in feeding (84 per cent) and management (76 per cent) in the rearing of goats in Ranaghat-I Block of Nadia district of West Bengal. Results indicated that 20 per cent of farm women were actively involved in breeding of animals. The study revealed that 16 per cent rural women were engaged in health care of animals. In the study area only 8 per cent women members were involved in marketing regarding selling or purchasing of goats (Table 1).

#### **Ranaghat-II Block**

Analysis of the data revealed that women members of farmers' family played a major role in feeding (88 per cent) and management (60 per cent) in the rearing of goats in Ranaghat-II Block of Nadia district of West Bengal. Results indicated that 28 per cent of farm women were actively involved in breeding of animals. The study revealed that 20 per cent rural women were engaged in health care of animals. In the study area only 12 per cent women members were involved in marketing regarding selling or purchasing of goats (Table 1).

**Table 1:** Distribution of the women on the basis of their participation in goat rearing in five blocks of Nadia district of West Bengal

Sl. No.	Name of the block	Activities	Number	Percentage (%)
1.	Haringhata	Feeding	18	72.00
		Management	16	64.00
		Breeding	7	28.00
		Health care	5	20.00
		Marketing	2	8.00
2.	Chakdah	Feeding	21	84.00
		Management	17	68.00
		Breeding	6	24.00
		Health care	4	16.00
		Marketing	3	12.00
3.	Ranaghat-I	Feeding	21	84.00
		Management	19	76.00
		Breeding	5	20.00
		Health care	4	16.00
		Marketing	2	8.00
4.	Ranaghat-II	Feeding	22	88.00
		Management	15	60.00
		Breeding	7	28.00
		Health care	5	20.00
		Marketing	3	12.00
5.	Hanskhali	Feeding	20	80.00
		Management	19	76.00
		Breeding	6	24.00
		Health care	4	16.00
		Marketing	2	8.00

**Hanskhali Block**

Analysis of the data revealed that women members of farmers' family played a major role in feeding (80 per cent) and management (76 per cent) in the rearing of goats in Ranaghat-II Block of Nadia district of West Bengal. Results indicated that 24 per cent of farm women were actively involved in breeding of animals. The study revealed that 16 per cent rural women were engaged in health care of animals. In the study area only 8 per cent women members were involved in marketing regarding selling or purchasing of goats (Table 1).

From the study revealed that women were responsible for the tasks like taking the animals for grazing, fodder collection, chaffing and storage of fodder etc. Almost entire activities, so far as washing and cleaning of goat sheds and feeding of goats, were being performed by the women. Results indicated that the rural women participation in all blocks in breeding activities was found to be minor activities due to social mores and taboos in society. Analysis of the data revealed that women participation in health care activities was found to be minor activities due to lack of knowledge regarding health care activities. The women in their late middle and old age actively participated in health care as they had learnt the things by seeing and out of experience. Most of the respondents interviewed were of the view that they require lot of training and knowledge with regard to the health care aspects. From the study it was seen that no women take decision without the permission of their spouse for selling the animals. The present finding is supported by the earlier workers (Nandi *et al.*, 2011; Samanta *et al.*, 2009). Arshad *et al.* (2013) reported that women contribute in livestock management activities in addition to their routine household duties. Chauhan (2011) observed that farm women took a self-decision for decoration of house (79.17%) and selection and preparation of food (70.83%) in case of home management. Raut (2004) observed that 40% or more of total time on animal husbandry activities was contributed by female family members. Narmatha *et al.* (2009) reported that level of participation of women in livestock farming activities, actual doing of the work was more in management (85.5%), feeding (79.66%), health care (68.66%) and breeding (61.32%). But their actual participation was very low in marketing, selection of livestock enterprises, availing credit facilities and record maintenance. Upadhyay and Desai (2011) reported that farm women took independent decisions in the aspects of fodder management and milking whereas decisions in respect of economic aspects were taken jointly with their male counterparts. The participation was observed more in the aspects related to milking, feeding, health care and management, breeding and less in general aspect of animal husbandry. Kumar and Prajapati (2011) reported that farm women had poor knowledge status about the vaccination and other technical issues of the business as they were inadequately exposed to media,

technical information and trainings. Tyagi *et al.* (2014) reported that women plays important roles in most of the activities, viz., management, nutrition, health, reproduction and breeding, economics and marketing related to goat rearing but management and financial sharing from goat rearing remain their prime activities. Shetter *et al.* (2005) reported that participation of the women was found to slightly higher in regular activities than in the health activities, followed by marketing activities. Number of mandays consumed by regular activities was maximum, which was followed by health activities and marketing activities. Regarding decision making pattern, the decisions were made by wife alone in the activities; caring the animals and fixing the time of milking. Rajkumar and Kavithaa (2014) reported that rural men were actively involved in health care, decision making and cash generating activities like taking sick animals for medical treatment (93.33 per cent), caring animals for breeding (86.66 per cent), taking the male kids for castration (85 per cent) and marketing of animals (81.66 per cent).

**Conclusion**

From the present study it can be concluded that women were responsible for the tasks like taking the animals for grazing, fodder collection, chaffing and storage of fodder etc. Almost entire activities, so far as washing and cleaning of goat sheds and feeding of goats, were being performed by the women. Participation of women in breeding activities was found to be minor activities due to social mores and taboos in society. Participation of women in health care activities was found to be minor activities due to lack of knowledge regarding health care activities. From the study no women take decision without the permission of their spouse for selling the animals.

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