



Farmers' Perception towards the Use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) Tools for Goat Rearing Practices in Fatehpur District of Uttar Pradesh, India

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Received: 27.07.2018 | Revised: 30.08.2018 | Accepted: 10.09.2018

ABSTRACT

The study investigated perception of goat rearing farmers towards the use of information communication technology tools in Fatehpur district of Uttar Pradesh state. This study was conducted to identify the awareness, accessibility, utilization pattern and constraints perceived by 150 goat rearing farmers towards the use of ICT tools in Fatehpur districts of Uttar Pradesh. The result revealed that majority of the respondents (80.66%) had low awareness level of using of ICT tools, 48.00 per cent respondents had low level of accessibility of ICT tools, whereas 90 per cent of respondents had low utilization level of ICT tools. Among constraints, lack of training for using ICT tools was perceived as serious constraints by 95.34 per cent of respondents. Hence, study recommends that government agencies should conduct training programme and awareness campaign to disseminate beneficial effect of using ICT tools for improvement of livelihood of the goat farmers.

Key words: Awareness, Accessibility, Goat farmers, Information communication technology, Utilization pattern.

INTRODUCTION

India has a long tradition in livestock farming, mainly goats as it boasts nearly 16 per cent of world goat population and forms 26.04 per cent of total livestock population of the country¹. Holding the reputation of second largest goat owning country in world, these small ruminants are widely distributed in all agro-ecological zones of India due to easy adaptation and reared mainly by the small and marginal farmers, including landless

agricultural labourers. Goats are multi-purpose animal reared for milk, meat, fibre, skin together with fewer requirements of space and additional facilities. Despite their products, they are also used as a holistic tool for land vegetation management by consuming weeds² along with continuous generation of income and employment makes them popular among small holders as source of livelihood security with virtually no capital, resource and formal training³.

Cite this article: Yadav, P., Mohan, B., Chander, M., Goyal, J., Kumar, A., Bharti, R., Farmers' Perception towards the use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) Tools for Goat Rearing Practices in Fatehpur District of Uttar Pradesh, India, *Int. J. Pure App. Biosci.* 7(3): 253-256 (2019). doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18782/2320-7051.6749>

Although having tremendous potential to be projected as the 'Future Animal' for rural and urban prosperity, still this sector recorded depreciation of 4 per cent in the 19th livestock census. Reasons are numerous but one of the reasons identified for such a situation is weak technology transfer and extension mechanism including inadequate extension services in the country⁴.

The exploitation of the opportunities offered by the goat sector requires a robust extension system as it plays a vital role in quick dissemination of technological information from the research system to farmers in the field and reporting of farmers' feedback to the research system. Information communication technology (ICT) is one of the means where its potential can be exploited to strengthen the linkage amongst research and extension system. Moreover, ICT also make goat farmers competent enough for taking a decision for action by providing information arise from the goat farming activities. Hence, study of awareness about ICT, accessibility to different ICT tools, their utilization pattern and different constraints perceived by the goat farmers are very important in understanding situation at field level as most of the time farmers themselves may not be aware about revolutionary communication technologies. In this context, the present study was carried out to analyze their awareness level, accessibility, availability and to elicit the constraints faced by goat farmers with respect to information communication technologies.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The present study was conducted in the purposively selected Fatehpur district, owing

3.97 lakh goats and second most goat populated district of Uttar Pradesh state¹. Considering distance of location from each other five blocks (Amauli, Khajuha, Bahaua, Bhitaura, and Dhata) were selected purposively. Further, two village were selected purposively from each selected block on the basis of highest goat population. From each village 15 households owning at least five goats were selected randomly making a final sample size of 150 respondents from ten villages. "Ex-post facto" research design was used to study the different aspects of ICTs perceived by goat farmers viz, awareness of farmers towards ICT tools and their accessibility and utilization pattern along with constraints perceived by them while goat rearing. The data were collected through a semi-structured interview schedule prepared specially for study. The data thus collected had been analyzed by frequencies and percentage.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Awareness of farmers towards the use of ICT tools in goat rearing practices

It is evident (Table 1) that majority of the respondents (80.66%) had low awareness level of using of ICT tools. A considerable percentage of respondents (18.0%) had low level of awareness on ICT tools followed by a very small proportion i.e. 1.34 per cent of respondents having high level of awareness on ICT tools. Average awareness score of goat farmers for ICTs tools came out to be quite low viz. 1.21. It could be concluded from the above results that, goat farmers possessed low to medium level of awareness regarding ICT tools for goat rearing practices.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents based on level of awareness for ICT tools (n=150)

Sl. No.	Level of awareness	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low (1-1.66)	121	80.66
2.	Medium (1.67-2.332)	027	18.00
3.	High (2.33-3)	002	01.34
Mean= 1.21			

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage

Level of Accessibility of ICT tools in goat rearing practices

Table 2 reveals that, it was not easy to access internet / computer, newspaper, radio, and television by majority of respondents (96.00,

62.00, 56.66 and 58.66 per cent, respectively), whereas majority of the respondents (77.30%) were found easy access to mobile phone. Average accessibility score of different ICT tools was found to be 8.97.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according their accessibility level to ICTs tools (n=150)

Sl. No.	ICT Tools	Degree of Accessibility			
		Very easy	Easy	Fairly easy	Not easy
1.	Internet/ Computer	0 (0)	0 (0)	6 (4.00)	144 (96.00)
2.	Mobile phone	18 (12.00)	116 (77.30)	9 (6.00)	7 (4.70)
3.	Newspaper	7 (4.66)	20 (13.34)	30 (20.00)	93 (62.00)
4.	Radio	8 (5.34)	23 (15.34)	34 (22.66)	85 (56.66)
5.	Television	10 (6.67)	18 (12.00)	34 (22.67)	88 (58.66)
		Average Accessibility Score = 8.97			

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage

Utilization pattern of ICT tools in goat rearing practices

Table 3 revealed that 96.66 per cent of the respondents had never utilize internet/computer in goat rearing practices whereas only 3.34 per cent of farmers utilize computer rarely to avail information. Mobile phone as

ICT was never utilized by nearly three-fourth (71.34%) of the respondents as ICT tools. Majority of the respondents had no utilization of ICT tools like newspaper (94.00%), radio (94.66%) and television (99.34%) in the study area.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents by pattern of utilization of ICT facilities (n=150)

Sl. No.	ICT Tools	Pattern of Utilization			
		Regularly	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
1.	Internet/ Computer	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (3.34)	145 (96.66)
2.	Mobile phone	0 (0)	7 (4.66)	36 (24.00)	107 (71.34)
3.	Newspaper	0 (0)	0 (0)	9 (6.00)	141 (94.00)
4.	Radio	0 (0)	0 (0)	8 (5.34)	142 (94.66)
5.	Television	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0.66)	149 (99.34)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage

Constraints while using ICT tools

Table 4 revealed that majority of the respondents (92.66%) had faced serious constraints of interrupted power supply to utilizing the ICT tools and more than two-third of the respondents (66.66%) had inadequate

access of ICT tools as mild constraints, while majority of respondents had perceived high cost of ICT (80.66%), technical knowledge (88.00%) and lack of training for using ICT tools (95.34%) as serious constraints.

. Table 4: Constraints while using ICT tools (n=150)

Sl. No.	Constraints	Constraints level		
		Serious	Mild	Not constraints
1.	Poor power supply	0 (0)	11 (07.34)	139 (92.66)
2.	Inadequate access of ICTs	23 (18.00)	100 (66.66)	27 (15.34)
3.	High cost of ICT Tools	121 (80.66)	22 (4.67)	7 (4.67)
4.	Lack of technical knowledge	132 (88.00)	17 (11.34)	1 (00.66)
5.	Lack of training for using ICT tools	143 (95.34)	7 (4.66)	0 (0)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage

CONCLUSIONS

Awareness level, accessibility and utilization of ICT tools by the farmers are very poor in the sample area as most of them still opting traditional goat rearing practices. Moreover, lack of awareness toward use of ICT tools and technical knowledge of using them are the most significant constraints perceived by the respondents. Hence, there is a need for government agencies to conduct training programme and awareness campaign to disseminate beneficial effect of using ICT tools for improvement of livelihood of the farmers.

Acknowledgment

The authors are highly thankful to Director, ICAR-Central Institute for Research on Goats, Makhdoom, India, for providing necessary facilities to carry out the present investigation.

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