

Socio-economic Analysis of Livestock Traders: A Case Study of Uttar Pradesh, India

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Abstract-Livestock trade is a major informal sector that provides work opportunities as well as earning for urban jobless people, marginal and small farmers particularly those belong to lower strata of the society. The present study is an attempt to assess involvement of the different type of livestock traders and their travelling behaviour to visit markets and to describe their caste, education, income, dwelling conditions and basic amenities in Shahjahanpur district, Uttar Pradesh. On the basis of stratified sampling 14 periodic were selected markets where 25% buffalo, cattle, and goat traders were investigated for detail study. The buffalo traders were in high concentration followed goat and cattle traders. They travelled distance till more 60 km to visit the markets where above 76% livestock traders, belonged to OBC and SC categories. A majority of them was far away good dwelling and health facilities.

Key words: Traders, livestock, distance, caste, income and basic amenities

I. INTRODUCTION

Livestock farming is considered an integral part of Indian rural life. It has been played a multifaceted role in shaping society and economic conditions at household level in India since centuries through the production of milk, meat and assisting the agricultural operations in many ways [1]. It emerged as a significant growth leverage of Indian economy and considered as an option for rural employment and rural health by nutrition intake. It contributes around 6% to the GDP and 25% to the agricultural GDP. This sector has a significant positive impact on income and employment and poverty reduction in rural areas where distribution of livestock is more democratic as compared to land [2]. It provides remunerative self-employment compared to agriculture and ensures food and nutritional security, particularly for children and women. It upgrades rural health through providing dietary intake per head [3]. The economic importance of marginal and small farmers is also projected through their involvement in household livestock rearing, especially of small specie like goat [4]. These livestock are described as economic resource and source employment at grass roots level in India [5]. It is thought as profitable system of production for the farmers of low size of land holding. [6].

Periodic markets are the most important nodal points for transaction where surplus of livestock like cattle, buffalo sheep and goats are brought to the markets through walking by producer sellers from different villages. A chunk of

population is involved to trade livestock within the market centre to earn profit where as they facilitate livestock transaction at small and large scale for local and regional level [7].

The socio-economic condition of livestock traders is an essential to provide vital information on the unorganized employment operation for, planning, and policy formulation in livestock and employment sector. But, the study on the traders who involved in livestock marketing at grass roots level has not been well undertaken by researchers for assessing their socio-economic conditions [8]. However, some sporadic efforts were undertaken by agricultural economists and the geographers [5, 9].

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Keeping into consideration the significance of socio-economic analysis of livestock traders at grass roots level, an effort is made in Shahjahanpur district, Uttar Pradesh with following objectives.

- To assess involvement of the traders in the transaction of different species of the livestock.
- To describe their travelling behavior, caste, education, income, housing conditions and basic amenities.

Data and methodology

The present study is based fully on the primary data collected through field survey due paucity of secondary data socio-economic conditions of livestock traders. Fourteen rural markets, one from each block have been selected on basis of stratified random sampling technique. The selected markets have been surveyed in the year 2007 and 2008. On the basis of random sampling 25% traders of each periodic market, were sampled to obtain information in detail regarding movement, education, caste, income, employment of buffalo, cattle, and goat traders. The collected data were analysed with simple statistical technique and represented through the table and diagrams.

Study Area

Shahjahanpur district is a part of Rohilkhand division of Uttar Pradesh forming the part of the Great Indian Plain (the Ganga plain). The latitudinal and longitudinal extent of the district is 27° 35' N to 28° 20' N and 79° 37' E to 80° 23' E. The total area of the district is 4575 sq. km and total

population is 2549,458 persons according to 2001 census. More than 75% population of the study area depends on agriculture. It is divided into four *tahsils* (subdivisions) namely Powayan, Tilhar, Shahjahanpur, and Jalalabad. There are 14 community development blocks, 11 urban centres, 2425 revenue villages 170 rural periodic markets. In the study area, 846947 heads of livestock consisting 315190 buffalo, 244535 cattle, 242550 sheep and goats are reared.

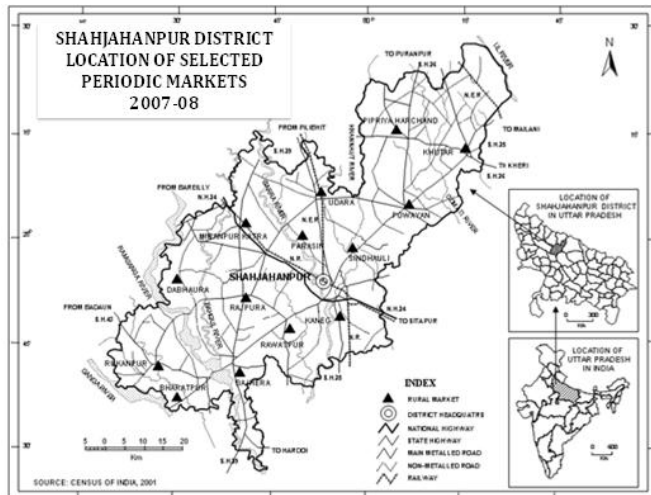


Fig.1 Location of study area and selected markets

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Livestock husbandry is an allied activity of agriculture in the study area where livestock husbandry is attached with milk, its product and cultivation of crops. The important species of livestock are cattle, buffalo, and goats.

Participation of different livestock traders

Fig 2 shows that a chunk of trader population (51.47%) was engaged in the transaction of buffalo followed goats (27.29%) and cattle (22.84%) respectively in the selected periodic markets (Fig.1).



Plate 1: Buffalo traders in Bajhera market-photo by M. Ali



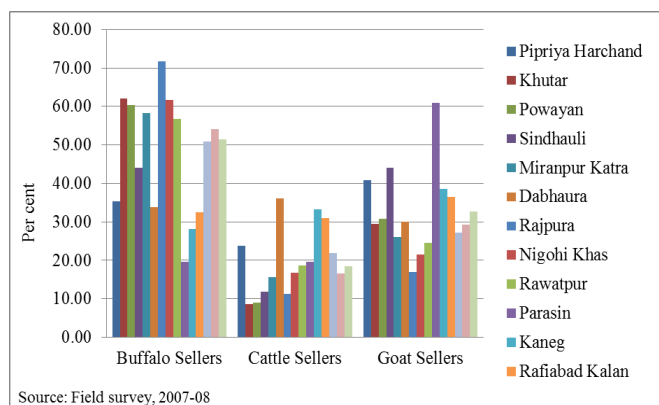
Plate 2: Cattle traders in Bajhera market-photo by M. Ali

Moreover, landless and marginal farmers as well as casual labourers are in a great extent [2]. They are either engaged in buffalo rearing for livelihood or supplement to their income and nutritional intake. They dispose of their livestock surplus in this market. Being good location in its threshold area and weekly nature of the market encouraged a good share of the buffalo traders.



Plate 3: Goat traders in Bajhera market-photo by M. Ali

Fig 2 shows that goat traders occupied the second position that presents the regional reflection in regard of marginal farmers and landless labourers of surroundings of the respective markets. The share of goat traders was the highest in Parasin market that was situated in the vicinity of the Khannuat and the Garra Rivers, where concentration of landless agricultural labourers in majority leads to high share of goat traders. However, the buyers visit from the nearby urban centre, Shahjahanpur (10 km away).



Source: Field survey, 2007-08

Fig 2. Type of livestock traders

The participation of cattle sellers was on third position. It was due to increasing of mechanization in agriculture which decreased demand of cattle for cultivation. Besides, the social and religious prohibition for slaughtering of cattle forced to minimize involvement of people in cattle trade. The highest proportion of cattle sellers (41.67%) was recorded in Dabhaura where cattle were transacted for agriculture and pulling carts. Directly consumption of milk and main occupation in the hinterland of the market and processing for *khoa*, *ghee* created the demand of cattle.

Livestock traders by travelling behavior

The livestock traders travelled different distances to maximize their profit by cumulative trade with spatial variations [1].

Table 1. Livestock traders by travelling behavior

Periodic Markets	Below 20 km (%)	20-40 km (%)	Above 40 km (%)
Pipriya Harchand	69.39	23.81	6.80
Khutar	77.65	16.47	5.88
Powayan	67.50	26.79	5.71
Sindhauri	57.24	31.58	11.18
Miranpur Katra	64.06	18.55	17.39
Dabhaura	56.11	30.56	13.33
Rajpura	82.05	15.38	2.56
Nigohi Khas	71.94	21.94	6.12
Rawatpur	62.37	24.75	12.88
Parasin	68.29	24.39	7.32
Kaneg	53.85	26.92	19.23
Rafiabab Kalan	51.94	26.21	21.84
Bharatpur	74.56	15.98	9.47
Bajhera	63.06	22.52	14.41
Total	65.53	22.88	11.01

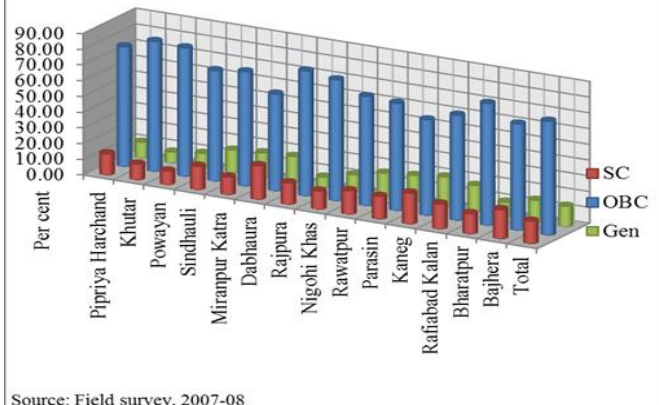
Source: Field survey, 2007-08

The rancher sellers travelled a shorter distance markets to buy and sell the animals. Table 1 shows the fact that the periodic markets of the district were dominated by the producer sellers so 65.53% traders visit below 10 km. The buying traders are urban or itinerant traders, who visit the markets to purchase the livestock at cheap prices to sell at relatively higher rates in other markets. It was recorded during field surveys that nearly 23% traders arrived from 20-40 km

and at least 11% traders visit more than 40 km from different directions.

Livestock traders by caste

The caste system, with its social stratification and social restrictions continues major impact on Indian social set [10]. The system generally was identified in the Hinduism, is also prevalent among Muslims, Christians and so on. It is caste that inextricably linked to a proxy for social-economic status [11].



Source: Field survey, 2007-08

Fig 3. Livestock traders by caste

Working castes now known as other backward classes (OBC) and scheduled castes (SC) were always poor and considered at bottom of the Verna systemⁱ and were kept away from opportunities to require healthy social needs. Fig 3 shows that more than 76% traders belonged to OBC and SC categories such as *Qureshi*, *Kasai*, *Chikwa*, *Aheer*, *Yadav*, *Gurjar*, *Gadriya*, *Nat*, *Khatteek*, *Jatav*, *Dhiyar* and so on. Economically they were poor, having highly concentration of landless or marginal farmers and unemployed people.

Livestock traders by level of education

Education is one of the most important determinants of person's social status. It is a contributory factor for moving up the society [12]. Educational backwardness was common among the livestock traders. Fig.4 explains that at least 68% traders were either illiterate or having primary level of the education followed by 23.46% secondary and 8.37% higher respectively.

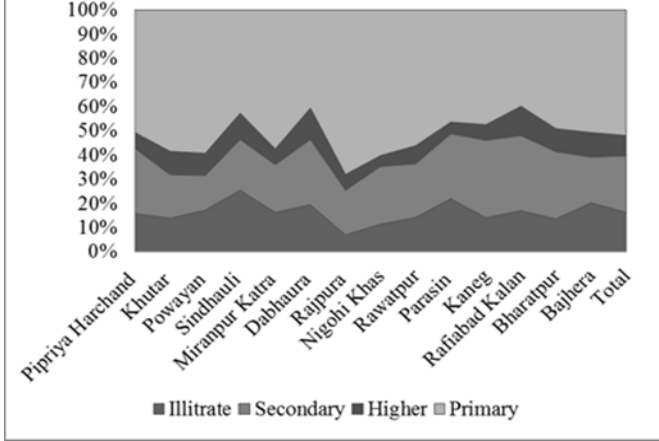


Fig 4. Livestock traders by education

The higher concentration of lower educationally backward traders reflects the lower income, poverty and prevailing thinking in the mind about education. A respondent Saleem in Rajpura market, said about the education “*Hum pad Likh kar ka karie, naukari to mil nahi*” (What we will do to get education, service is not available for us). However, the traders who having higher education and involved in this profession shows the unemployment conditions in the study area whereas, to earn the livelihood, they joined trading of livestock in the markets.

Livestock Sellers by residence

Fig 5 indicates that the highest participation (50.47%) was producer sellers followed by urban traders (29.25%) and village traders (20.28%) respectively. A lion’s share of producer sellers was due to the great participation of marginal and small farmers in transaction. However their participation varies market to market present the regional reflection in regard of marginal farmers and landless labourers of surroundings of the respective markets.



Fig 5. Livestock traders by residence

The jobless and under employed people joined this profession as urban traders. They visit rural areas and other periodic markets to purchase surplus livestock to sell in the selected markets to earn their livelihood and to the supplement for their income.

Livestock traders by income

The income of livestock traders depend upon their mobility, hard work, negotiation capacity, trade skill how they satisfy the customer to get maximum profit.

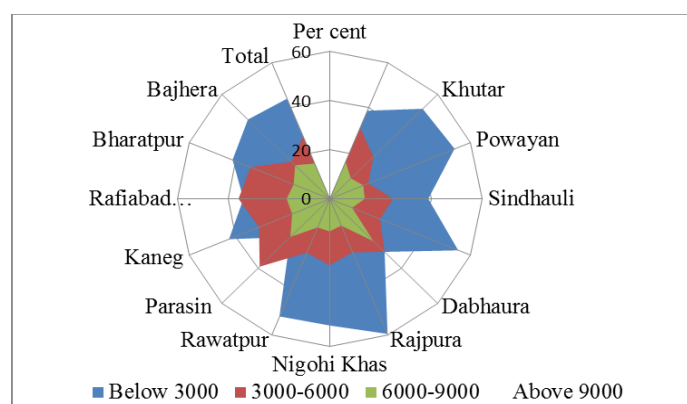


Fig 6. Livestock traders by monthly income

During the field surveys, it was recorded that nearly 71% livestock traders earned below than 6000 rupees/month (Fig 6), however, such type of earning varies market to market according their location, hinterland and road connectivity. Fig 6 shows that 15.54% traders who belong to nearby market having the professional skill earned between 6000-9000 rupees/month. The cream group of the livestock traders, having earning more than 9000 rupees/month, was 13.1% in the selected markets. They were mainly large landholders, and urban suppliers who mainly belong to regional cities. They visit these markets to purchase the livestock to fulfill urban demands, meat factories and so on.

Livestock traders by basic amenities and facilities

Fig 7 depicts the distribution of dwelling among livestock traders by types of the construction. More than half livestock trader population (nearly 54%) was residents of *katcha* houses and huts. Due to the poor affordability and economic conditions, there was mainly ground used for spending nights.

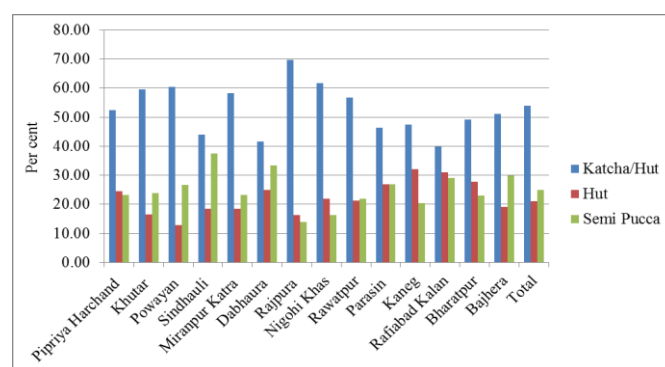


Fig 7. Livestock traders by dwellings

Nearly 25% were semi-pucca dwellers containing some means to satisfy their basic needs, but they were not able to afford construction of pucca houses. At least 1/5th share of livestock traders was residing in the pucca houses.

Table 2. Livestock traders by availability of drinking water, toilet and health facilities

Periodic Markets	Availability of safe drinking water (%)	Availability of toilet facilities (%)	Availability of govt. health facilities (%)
Pipriya Harchand	96.60	82.99	68.03
Khutar	96.47	95.29	74.51
Powayan	96.79	94.64	71.43
Sindhauli	95.39	94.74	65.79
Miranpur Katra	96.81	87.25	82.90
Dabhaura	96.67	69.44	74.44
Rajpura	96.92	93.85	63.08
Nigohi Khas	96.43	88.27	73.98
Rawatpur	97.72	83.84	67.42
Parasin	96.34	92.68	54.88
Kaneg	98.08	73.08	62.82
Rafiabad Kalan	97.09	73.79	64.08
Bharatpur	97.04	84.02	57.99
Bajhera	97.07	85.59	70.72
Total	96.91	85.92	68.00

Source: Field survey, 2007-08

Table 2 indicates that nearly 3% livestock traders did not use sources of safe drinking water from hand pumps, public supply and so on. In spite of a wide range of programmes, those were run by governments for safe drinking water at grass roots level.

Table 2 also deals with status of toilet facilities which were not available among 11% households of the livestock traders. It was noted during field surveys that at least 30% traders of Daboura market were far away from toilet facilities because the catchments area of the market is backward, lies in *doab* of the Ramganaga and the Bahgul Rivers where the government schemes were not implemented properly. However, there were a good proportion of traditional toilets which are not advisable for health and hygiene.

Table 2 reflects that 32% livestock traders accepted that they were far away from the health facilities provided by the governments. Such problems were commonly recorded in every selected market, however, the proportion varied from one to other market. The livestock traders made complaints that governments are not giving attention to open the hospitals, and appointments of doctors to take care of the human and livestock populations.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of socio-economic conditions shows that buffalo traders were on the top transaction of livestock trade because study region is drained by the three major river and their tributaries having flood prone and swampy conditions. There were *Yadav*, *Gurjjar* communities mainly involved to rear and transact the buffalo for agricultural operation and milk purposes. Second place was recorded as goat sellers both communities due to fulfill meat requirements. Producer sellers were mainly involved in 10 km, a small proportion of 11% traders visit more than 40 km. In the trade of livestock, lower caste people such as OBC and SC were dominated. The education backward ness was a common phenomenon recorded among the livestock traders, however, due to lack of employment opportunities; high educated youths were also involved to earn their livelihood and supplementary income. A higher proportion of traders was earning below than 6000 rupees per month. Nearly 79% livestock traders were owner of hut, *katcha* and *pucca* dwellings. However, small segment of livestock traders was far away from safe drinking water, 11% had not toilet facilities in their houses, and 32% were not getting health services despite many efforts of governments.

ENDNOTE

i. Verna system is the source of present caste hierarchy in India in which society was divided into four classes, Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishays, and Shudras based on the occupations. In this hierarchical order Brahmins were on the top ranking followed by Kshatriyas, Vaishays, and, Shudras respectively. In due course of time, it has become extremely rigid whereas the low caste people have been kept away from opportunities for healthy social needs.

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