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Livestock Marketing Practices in Hassan District of Karnataka

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Abstract

The present study was conducted in selected shandies of Hassan district to analyze the trading practices of the farmers with respect to livestock. About 200 participants i.e., 90 sellers, 90 buyers and 20 intermediaries were included in the study. Results revealed that livestock trading was negotiable business. About 45 percent of the farmers visited 3 to 4 shandies in a week. Livestock business was more active in the morning hours of the day. About 43 percent of the farmers sold the animals due to distress. It was found that 54.5 percent of the farmers revealed that animals were transported through walk. Among the respondents 54.44 percent of buyers and 62.22 percent of sellers were dependent on the middlemen. Further 55 percent of the middlemen were marginal and 35 percent were landless. Most of the participants in the shandies were landless to marginal farmers. Livestock business was also a source of livelihood to many of the farmers and middlemen. The sales were completely unorganized without any weighing facility for the small ruminants.

Key words: Shandies, Middlemen, Livestock marketing, Hassan District.

Introduction

Livestock sector is an integral part of Indian agriculture. The white revolution has been a commendable achievement, in creating a regulated market for milk in the country. Several government policies have helped in establishing regulated markets facilitating marketing of agriculture produce. However adequate attention has not been paid towards livestock market except that for milk and eggs. Also marketing of livestock is associated with high risk and is laborious. Further, livestock marketing in India is unorganized and involves various middlemen, unnecessary transportation and even death of animals during transportation. Lack of awareness about markets, pricing structure, and unorganized marketing are the lacunae in fetching better prices for the farmer (BAIF, 2008 and Porwal *et. al.*, 2006). Therefore, a study was undertaken in five shandies of Hassan district in Karnataka state with the objectives to collect the details of Livestock Shandies, study the characteristics of the animals traded, study the characteristics of the participants and to identify the trading pattern of the livestock.

Research Methodology

The study was conducted for a period of one year in the year 2014-15 in five livestock shandies of Hassan District in Karnataka state. A total of 200 participants consisting of 90 sellers, 90 buyers

and 20 intermediaries (Middlemen) were interviewed. The participants in each category were randomly selected and interviewed with a semi structured interview schedule designed for each category. The data was also gathered at different intervals to check for seasonal impact on study. Preliminary information on the details of shandy, characteristics of animal traded was collected from the key informants, authorities and through personal observation. The data gathered was subjected to simple statistical tools like mean, median, mode, percentage, standard deviation, range and frequency as per necessity.

Results and Discussion

The results obtained in the present study is presented as below:

Spatial and Temporal Behavior of Livestock Transaction:

Table 1: Spatial behavior of participation in livestock shandies

Participants	Total Number of Participants	No. of Shandies Visited in a week		
		5 or More	3 to 4	1 to 2
Sellers	90	23	41	26
		25.56 %	45.56 %	28.88 %
Buyers	90	18	38	34
		20 %	42.22 %	37.78 %
Intermediaries (Middlemen)	20	8	9	3
		40 %	45 %	15 %

Table 1 illustrated that the rural buyers and sellers visited three to five nearest shandies in a week. This was an added advantage to the seller as he could market the livestock on any day. Further, it also facilitated the brokers for continuous opportunity to participate in livestock trading and earn their daily needs.

Table 2: Temporal behavior of participation in livestock shandies

Participants	Total Number of Participants	Temporal Behaviour of Participation		
		Early morning hours (till 10 AM)	Half Day (till noon)	Whole day
Sellers	90	39	25	26
		43.33 %	27.78 %	28.89 %
Buyers	90	43	14	33
		47.78 %	15.56 %	36.66 %
Intermediaries (Middlemen)	20	6	5	9
		30 %	25 %	45 %

Table 2 illustrated that majority of sellers and buyers visited the shandy in the early morning hours. This was a result to overcome the sunny day and facilitate the farmer to spend the rest time in other activities. However it was evident to see the intermediaries participating for long hours in a day.

Location and functioning of the shandies

All the shandies under study were regulated by the local Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC), but were unorganised. As per the observations made there was no proper fencing at two of the shandies (Mosale Hosalli and Arsikere) and space itself was a major constraint in Hassan livestock shandy. There were no specially constructed loading or unloading concrete docks in any of the shandy. None of the species of livestock was provided with sheds in shandies, where only the self-grown trees were found in the shandies. Watering and feeding facilities for animals were

improper and other facilities such as toilets and bathrooms, provision for garbage disposal, veterinary and medical facilities were lacking. However parking provisions were appreciable in all the shandies.

The sale practices were mainly through direct negotiation between sellers and buyers and also through middlemen called 'brokers'. Usage of secret-code words to define the market price of animals was in vogue. Bargaining 'under cover' was prevalent in all the shandies, where the bargainers closed their digits with cloth and negotiate through finger palpation. The bullocks were judged with many parameters like breed, dentition, body conformation, shape of horns, skin, shoulders, eyes, hooves, tail etc. The milch animals were priced mainly based on breed type, number and stage of lactation, structure of udder, appearance of milk vein, pelvic girdle, etc. In case of small ruminants, the assessment was through the muscle thickness at loin and thigh besides girth. There was no weighing facility for small animals in any of the shandy.

Characteristics of Animals traded

The proportion of different species of livestock transacted in an individual market is shown in table 3.

Table 3: Head Counts in the Market

Name of the shandy	Cattle	Buffalo	Sheep & Goat
Chanraypatna	350-400	50-70	800-1000
Gandasi	1500-3000	150-200	400-500
Hassan	500-600	50-100	800-1000
Arsikere	300-400	50-70	600-800
MosaleHosalli	100-150	10-15	500-600

The proportion of transaction in each and every shandy exhibited a great fluctuation. Gandasi market in Hassan district is well known and dominates the cattle transaction in the district. It was evident to see the Hallikar breed of cattle in Gandasi and people from neighbouring districts and northern parts of Karnataka participated for the purchase of this reputed breed.

Reasons for transaction

The farmers involved in the transactions sold their animal as it was only the readily available asset for marginal and landless farmers to meet any immediate household expenditure. On interaction it was also reported that they could meet the school expenses of their children by making the sales. Surplus animals have also forced few farmers to sell. Lavania and Singh (2008) also reported that the main reason for selling goats in India was urgent need of money. Exchange was done to replace the stock.

Mode of Transportation

Table 4 reveals the transportation mode opted by the farmers to transport the animals. It was found that 54.5 percent farmers from the radius of 5- 15 kms walked with the animal to the market and 45.5 percent used either four-wheeler or two-wheeler quantum based.

Table 4: Transport mode of large animals in the study markets

No of Participants	By Walk		By Transport	
	200	109	54.5 %	91

Dependency on middlemen:

Many extension approaches aim at bypassing the middlemen to ensure higher profit to farmers.

From the study it was evident that 54 percent of the buyers and 62 percent of the farmers themselves relied upon the middlemen to make a rewarding transaction (Table 5).

Table 5: Dependency on middlemen

Category	Dependent		Independent	
	Sellers	49	54.44%	41
Buyers	56	62.22%	34	37.78%

Possession of Land

Table 6: Land Holdings of the traders

	Landless	Marginal (0-1 Hectare)	Small Farmers (1-2 Hectare)	Medium Farmers (2-4 Hectare)	Large (Above 4 Hectare)
Intermediaries	07	11	02	Nil	Nil
	35 %	55 %	10 %	-	-
Sellers	13	57	17	03	Nil
	14.4 %	63.3 %	18.9 %	3.33 %	-
Buyers	04	40	32	12	02
	4.44 %	44.4 %	35.6 %	13.3 %	2.2 %

Among the 20 fulltime traders interviewed 90 percent were landless or marginal. This could be the reason forcing them to be entrepreneurs in livestock trading. Among the sellers 63.3 percent were marginal who uptake livestock as a subsidiary occupation for their livelihood (Pankaj and Singh, 2008). From the overall study it was evident that livestock keeping was the primary occupation for both sellers and buyers.

Livestock Market as a source of Employment:

Apart from the middlemen, livestock markets also provide year round employment to canteens, sugarcane juice vendors, transport agencies and livestock equipment selling vendors. Many of these were found participating in different markets throughout the week.

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