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Assessment of knowledge level of tribal farmers regarding scientific animal husbandry practices of Madhya Pradesh

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The present study was conducted purposively in Mandla and Seoni district of Madhya Pradesh as these two districts have a sizeable proportion of tribal population. Five villages were selected randomly from each district (i.e., Mandla and Seoni) for the present study. From each district a total sample of 75 tribal livestock owners were selected on the basis of Random Proportionate Sampling (RPS) method. Thus, the final sample was comprised of 10 villages and 150 tribal livestock owners as respondents (n=150). The data shows that majority of the tribal livestock owners (72.00%) belonged to middle age group, 35.33 percent were illiterate and 69.33 per cent belonged to medium family size. The majority of the respondents (64.67%) possessed 1-2 hectare of land and belonged to small farmers' category, while, 13.33 percent of the respondents had less than 1 hectare of land and fell in the marginal farmers' category. The average land holding of tribal livestock owners is less than 2 hectare due to fragmentation of land and population explosion. Regarding overall herd composition the study also shows that majority of the respondents reared poultry (40%), followed by cattle (26%), goats (25%), pig (5%) and buffalo (4%), respectively. Data also indicates that majority of the respondents (84.67%) gave first preference to relatives, followed by neighbor (62.67%), gram sevaks (34.67%), veterinary doctors (15.33%), radio (11.33%), newspaper (8.00%) and television (6.00%), respectively. Data pertaining to knowledge level reveals that majority (64.37%) of the respondents had low level of knowledge followed by medium level of knowledge 35.63 per cent. None of the respondent had high level of knowledge regarding management, breeding, feeding and health care practices of animal husbandry. The relationship analysis reveals that age of the tribals farmers had negative and significant correlation ($r=-0.141$) with knowledge level about animal husbandry practices at 5 per cent level of significance while education of farmers had positive and significant (0.184) relationship with knowledge level. The independent variables namely, herd size (0.324) and information source utilization (0.173) by the tribals were found to have positive and significant correlation at 1 percent level of significance. Several earlier research findings show that education has an influence on the knowledge level. It is well established fact that frequency of information source utilization was positively related with knowledge of farmers. These findings were in accordance with the findings of Malik and Sohal (1980). With respect to annual gross income of the farmers was found to have positive and significant correlation with knowledge level at 5 percent level of significance.

Biography

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