

RELATIVE PREFERENCE FOR REARING PET AND FARM ANIMALS IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

A trend in reduction of livestock population and also in the number of people involved in livestock enterprise is a matter of great concern in the context of planning and economic stability of the country. Concurrently there is a slight increase in the pet animal population in urban and rural areas. In this connection a study was undertaken to find out the reasons for the weakening of livestock sector and to analyze the prospect of pet animals enterprises in the present scenario with special reference to social, economical, cultural and emotional factors involved in it.

A survey was conducted in Ollukkara area in Thrissur Corporation (Urban) and Adat Grama Panchayat in Thrissur District (rural) on 60 respondents selected at random from these areas out of which 28(47%) were from rural and 32(53%) from urban area. The survey was conducted by using a prestructured and well-designed questionnaire along with personal interview. Adequate care was taken to avoid any language barrier by explaining the questions at their own level of understanding. Information was also collected through direct observations in their system. The data collected were analyzed using appropriate statistical tools and the results interpreted. Results obtained in the study are furnished in the table below.

The study concentrated on the attitudinal references of common people for pet and farm animal. As the area of study was both on rural as well as urban, a fairly appreciable cultural, social, economical and emotional feeling playing a significant role for the selection of pet/farm animal was noticed. There was great influence of land in the rearing of farm animals – people tends to rear pet animals because of less space and this happens mainly in urban area. The fairly appreciable influence of agriculture on farm animal keeping is also noticeable especially in rural areas where there is higher proportion of agriculture when compared to urban areas.

The finding that cent per cent of the people interviewed has strong emotional bonds with their farm animals both in rural as well as urban area leads to break the barrier, which separates pet and farm animal. Here farm animal is actually playing the role of pet animal, loving the owner and being loved by the owner, over and above the profit given by the farm animal, which is of most importance.

From the result that about half the proportion of unemployed people in rural and urban area is willing to use opportunities in animal husbandry sector, this sector can prove to be a good remedy for unemployment, provided proper technical assistance and guidance are given.

It can be seen that there is an appreciable influence of profit on selecting farm animals in rural areas rather than pet animal because farm animals are rewarding more profit. On the other hand, the main reason for higher preference for pet animal in urban area was found to be the mental and emotional bond and affection they have with their pets rather than looking at profit. The urban people economically higher than rural people can definitely afford to have a pet just for companionship without expecting profit and this is not applicable in rural areas where their living depends on money earned from animal husbandry.

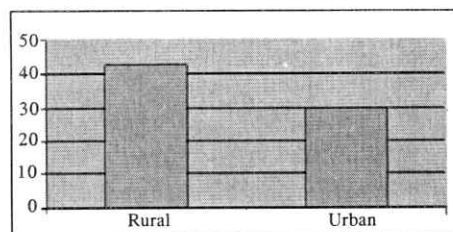


Fig. Willingness to take up animal husbandry

Sl. No.	Subject	Rural	Urban
1.	Status of land holding Living in own land Living in rented land	100% 0%	93.75% 6.25%
2.	Space availability Less space Enough space	3.5% 96.5%	9.38% 90.63%
3.	Type of animal reared Only pet animal Only farm animal Both pet and farm animal	21.5% 61% 18%	62.5% 9.3% 28%
4.	Expenses for food Is a problem Not a problem Not responded	25% 53% 22%	3.12% 34.37% 62.51%
5.	Reasons for not rearing farm animals Lack of time Lack of manual help Increased expenditure in rearing Lack of space Lack of interest	11.76% 20.59% 5.88% 50% 11.76%	5% 35% 20% 55% 5%
6.	Mental attachment with farm animals	100%	100%
7.	Mental attachment with pet animals Yes No	77.7% 11.1%	90.63% 9.38%
8.	Willingness to take farm animal rearing as a full time/part time job	50%	34%
9.	Willing to spent free time for rearing rabbit, poultry, pig, etc. using biowastes from home	53.57%	43.75%
10.	Attitude of people Whether vegetables, milk, egg, etc. produced in their own houses improve the health	100%	100%
11.	Preference for Pet animal Farm animal	25% 75%	75% 25%
12.	Proportion of people willing to take up Animal Husbandry as a full time job, if they get sufficient technical advices	42.85%	31.25%

Summary

A study was conducted to assess the relative preference for rearing pet and farm animals in rural and urban areas and associated factors with special reference to socioeconomic and behavioral parameters by conducting a survey in Ollukkara area in Thrissur Corporation (Urban) and Adat Gramapanchayat in Thrissur District (Rural). Sixty respondents were selected at random from these areas out of which 28 (47percent) were from rural and 32 (53 percent) from urban area. The overall results in the study indicated that rural people preferred to have livestock provided they are being given appropriate technological support and marketing facilities thereby beneficially contributing to employment generation. Urban people prefer to rear pet animals mainly as a means of mental relaxation, companionship and less

importance for economic gain. A strategic intervention in these areas with special consideration on their interest may play a pivot role in increasing the livestock and pet animal status of our country.

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