



Research Article

Rural Women's Involvement for Livestock Raising in Pakistan

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Abstract | Pakistan's primary industry is agriculture, which is divided into a number of subsectors including livestock, agricultural production, forestry, and fisheries. Livestock production contributes more to agriculture overall than any other sub-sector. The production of livestock accounts for 58.55% of agricultural output and 11.61% of the nation's GDP. Although the agricultural sector's share has decreased by 0.19% over the past few years, the livestock industry is booming, growing at a rate of 3.63%. Keeping in mind the significance of the livestock sector, this study was conducted in 2023 with a focus on the contribution of Pakistani female farmers to the production of animals. In many nations, including Pakistan, women are essential to the care of cattle. They carry out a variety of livestock management tasks, such as cutting fodder, watering and feeding animals, cleaning animal pens, and milking. In order to ascertain the involvement of women in livestock husbandry, a survey was carried out in the area of Dera Ghazi Khan. A well-structured questionnaire was utilized to collect data from female respondents during face-to-face interviews, a random selection approach was employed to choose a sample of 100 livestock farm homes from the research area. To gauge the level of women's participation, a composite score was created, and factors influencing women's participation in cattle farming were identified using statistical methods. The findings show that women dominated practically all farming operations in the chosen area.

Received | May 29, 2023; Accepted | June 10, 2023; Published | June 27, 2023

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Citation | Zubair, A., A.F. Chishtti, Z.A. Mehdie, A. Arshad, G.A. Malik and I. Batool. 2023. Rural Women's Involvement for Livestock Raising in Pakistan. *Pakistan Journal of Agricultural Research*, 36(2): 142-146.

DOI | <https://dx.doi.org/10.17582/journal.pjar/2023/36.2.141.146>

Keywords | Women, Agriculture, Production, Livestock, Farmers



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Introduction

The livestock industry is crucial for many impoverished households because it provides them with food, fuel, and a place to store their

riches in addition to serving as a source of revenue. Pakistan's population is mostly dependent on the livestock industry (Rehman *et al.*, 2017). Livestock is essential for the underprivileged and those without access to their own agricultural land in Pakistan's rural

areas. The main advantages of the livestock sector in Pakistan's rural areas are the provision of milk for their own dietary needs and money from milk sales to complete other needs of daily routine (Hasnain and Usmani, 2006).

The livestock industry is significantly contributing to the elimination of poverty among impoverished people who reside in rural areas. According to (Ali and Chaudhry, 2015), about 8 million households in rural areas specialize in the production of livestock and increase around 35% of their livestock revenue. About 70% of people resided in rural areas, where unemployment and poverty rates are quite high relative to job opportunities.

Under Pakistan's small-holding farming system, rural women are essential to the industry. They are actively involved in a wide range of tasks relating to managing livestock and growing crops. From dawn till nightfall, rural women are engaged in a variety of agricultural tasks, including as pre-harvest, post-harvest, and livestock management tasks (Younas and Yaqoob, 2005). Due to lack of statistics demonstrating their active participation in numerous agricultural operations, their participation is widely diffused but rarely recognized (Habib *et al.*, 2023).

In Pakistan's rural areas, women mostly work in the livestock production industry. Typically, rural women are responsible for caring for the cattle. According to (Nazli and Hamid, 1999), they also clean out sheds and process animal products. Unfortunately, their work with livestock is underestimated and considered to be household. The rural woman's job schedule is extremely hectic. Without assistance, the rural lady took care of livestock, chickens, and other animals (Thornton, 2010).

According to (Nasir *et al.*, 2004), Pakistani women are heavily involved in agriculture and animal maintenance. In rural areas, women traditionally work in agriculture and the raising of livestock. In comparison to men, women frequently spend more time on these jobs (Kristjanson *et al.*, 2014). In the animal husbandry industry, they provide 60% to 80% of the labour (Younas *et al.*, 2007). The effort that women do in Pakistan's cattle industry is extraordinary. Without the aid of women, the majority of livestock activities fall short. But sadly, they have never received compensation for their work (Khan and Khan, 2015).

Rural Pakistani women are actively involved in raising animals and doing agriculture. For the purpose of increasing their family's income and supplying their nutritional needs, their position in small production systems is particularly crucial (Younas *et al.*, 2007). Half of the population of rural areas consists of women who carry out both domestic and livestock related activities (Andaleeb *et al.*, 2017).

There is relatively little information currently available on the involvement of women in different livestock husbandry activities. Rural women in Punjab participate in almost all aspects of livestock care and improve the welfare of their families by supplying them with animal products for food, fuel, and cash (Ahmad, 2013). In general, women's contribution to rural cattle cannot be undervalued. Women are responsible for caring for the cattle, cleaning the homes, and even offering conventional medical treatment for illnesses. They also work with chickens and sell eggs in addition to milking and processing milk. In Punjab, Pakistan, women play a key part in the growth of the livestock industry.

Materials and Methods

Study area and data collection

The research issue for this study, which was carried out in Dera Ghazi Khan, was the role of women in Pakistan's livestock husbandry. A well-organized questionnaire was created for data collection, and then a straightforward random sample procedure was used. However, livestock rearing has emerged as one of the most significant value-added farming systems used in the nation. As it supplies meat, milk, and other dairy products, which enhance dietary intake, it is a significant source of food security (Köhler-Rollefson, 2001). In this study, 100 farmers were randomly chosen from among the many tehsils in the district of Dera Ghazi Khan. To cover the study's goals, almost all livestock farmers were interviewed.

Toll for data collection

A questionnaire was a suitable and methodical tool utilized to gather the data in a structured manner. It was presented to the respondent in order to gather accurate and pertinent information. In this study, information was gathered in person. Both literate and illiterate female respondents could have read every question and responded with ease about the subject matter. Data was then accurately analyzed using

SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) and Microsoft Office.

Results and Discussions

Any underdeveloped country's livestock industry plays a significant role in its growth. Women are actively involved in the production of livestock in the majority of Pakistan's rural areas. The purpose of the current study was to examine rural women's contributions to livestock production. Data analysis reveals that rural women's involvement in tasks such as animal care, herd size determination, animal purchasing, sale of animal products, and animal feeding was quite high (Habib *et al.*, 2022). However, they didn't participate all that much in things like raising livestock, breeding animals, selling them, growing fodder, and building animal barns. The distribution of responders by age group was shown in the table below. According to the table, the selected study area's mean age was determined to be 46.12 years, with a minimum age of 19 and a maximum age of 85 years Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of descriptive statistics of farmer's age.

| Units | Age |
|--------------------|-------|
| Mean | 46.12 |
| Minimum | 19 |
| Maximum | 85 |
| Standard Deviation | 13.20 |

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Based on these findings, the study suggests that government plans and programmes recognize the importance of women's engagement in the cattle business. Giving rural women access to loans and livestock training facilities may boost their involvement in livestock husbandry and provide them decision-making authority over livestock management (Amin *et al.*, 2010). Table 2 of the data revealed that rural women in the study area had a higher engagement rate in managing livestock than did male farmers Table 2.

Table 2: Participation of women into livestock.

| Category | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Wife | 48 | 48 |
| Husband | 19 | 19 |
| Both | 33 | 33 |
| None of them | 00 | 00 |

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

As part of their domestic duties, women are crucial in the management of cattle. Women in Pakistan are not given enough consideration in important household decisions, despite their significant contributions to a range of tasks both within and outside the home. The majority of their work linked to managing the farm, the chickens, and the livestock is regarded as being part of their household duties (Andaleeb *et al.*, 2017). According to the data, the vast majority of respondents were engaged in the cleaning, maintenance, feeding, and watering of livestock, as well as milking and other forms of milk processing, of unhealthy animals. In rural areas, women are more likely than men to carry out these duties Table 3.

Table 3: Distribution of female respondents based on involvement in livestock sector.

| Category | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Caring of diseased animal | 57 | 57% |
| Cleaning of animal sheds | 49 | 49% |
| Feeding, watering animals | 58 | 58% |
| Milking process | 78 | 78% |
| Calf rearing | 81 | 81% |
| Breeding livestock | 78 | 78% |

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Every family member has a vital and distinctive role to play in the family system as a whole. As a result, it is impossible for one member of the system to alter without also affecting changes in other family members. The family is the cornerstone of society, and its most crucial roles are to divide labour between the husband and wife and to take care of their children (Habib *et al.*, 2022). Production of livestock is a crucial part of farming systems. It is essential to emerging nations' rural economies, such as Pakistan's.

According to the study, rural women participated quite frequently in tasks including caring for animals, choosing the size of a herd, buying animals, selling their produce, and feeding animals. However, they didn't participate all that much in things like raising livestock, breeding animals, selling them, growing fodder, and building animal sheds. The majority of respondents agreed that family leaders should delegate decision-making authority to them.

Some respondents, however, expressed satisfaction

with their current level of participation in decision-making (Hasnain and Usmani, 2006). The government, private industry, religious leaders, or the media should educate men about the social and political rights of women. Additionally, male members should be made aware of the advantages of giving female members the chance to actively engage in making decisions in all facets of livestock management operations (Habib, 2021). They must be taught how to agree upon decisions rather than to take the initiative. Giving young people male and female equal opportunities to participate in discussions about all aspects of livestock management and decision-making will serve to lessen the dominance of men in later phases.

Acknowledgement

Authors are highly grateful to the respondents for giving time for our research work and allowing us to know how this field is playing its role in developmental sector of Pakistan.

Novelty Statement

Results from this study will provide better understanding of Rural Women's Involvement for Livestock raising in Pakistan. As this sector is playing its best role in rural sector of Pakistan for maintaining their livelihoods. This study will provide better understanding about this sector and will also highlights its best positive side in the society.

Author's Contribution

Asim Zubair: Conceive the Idea and wrote paper.

Anam Farid Chishtti: Helped in Literature Review.

Zohaib Atta Mehdi: Helped in Discussion Chapter.

Aamna Arshad: Helped in writing this paper especially in Methodology Chapter.

Ghulam Akbar Malik: Helped in Statistical Analysis.

Iffat Batool: Helped in Data Collection.

Conflict of interest

The authors have declared no conflict of interest.

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