



E-ISSN: 2320-7078

P-ISSN: 2349-6800

www.entomoljournal.com

JEZS 2020; 8(2): 146-149

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Received: 22-01-2020

Accepted: 24-02-2020

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Perceived behavior of livestock farmer towards Govt agencies during floods of 2014 in Kashmir

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Abstract

The present study was purposively carried out in Kashmir Division of Jammu and Kashmir state that was severely hit by devastating floods in September 2014. This study elaborates the role of Government organizations/agencies in livestock disaster management system. The findings of the study revealed that majority of the respondents (74.58%) reported the absence of reception of information from the government agencies with regard to livestock management during disasters and (62.92%) complained about the non availability of inputs and other services offered by these organizations during the floods. The results give a glimpse of the existing veterinary service setup in the study areas with lack of proper information dissemination system and also depict that least preference is given to the livestock sector in terms of rescue, relief and rehabilitation measures. The need of the hour is to necessitate the strengthening and mobilization of the Government agencies/organizations in case a disaster (flood) like situation arises in future and also Concerned Government agencies/State agriculture universities and meteorological departments should work together and have a greater coordination for better management of livestock during disasters through an efficient and reliable forecasting mechanism in place. Lack of early warning system followed by inadequate emergency medicine and ambulatory clinic facility were reported as major constraints in disaster risk communications. Further the findings depicted that private agencies and NGOs working for livestock disaster management were totally absent in the respective study areas which is to be taken into consideration.

Keywords: Disaster, livestock, NGO, organizations

Introduction

In an agrarian country like India with vast geo-climatic diversity, the economic contribution of livestock is far more versatile than depicted by its contribution to national GDP. A large number of people especially the rural masses are directly or indirectly involved with this sector and it has been estimated to support the livelihood of about 70 percent of the rural poor in India, thereby making Animal Husbandry an important subsidiary occupation of the farmers [1]. Despite its important contribution in national economy, this sector is facing many challenges like low productivity due to shortage of feed and fodder, ill-health, increased incidence of emerging and re-emerging animal diseases, inadequate infrastructure for marketing, processing and value addition and the most drastic being the natural calamities/disasters [4]. Disasters are not new to mankind they have been the constant and inconvenient companions of human being since time immemorial. World Health Organization [5] defines disaster as any occurrence that causes damage, ecological disruption, loss of human life, deterioration of health and health services on a scale sufficient to warrant an extraordinary response from outside the effected communication or area. The extent of damage in a disaster depends upon its impact, its characteristics and intensity. These natural disasters account for nearly 80 percent of all the disasters that occur in the world. Many of the developing countries are largely disaster prone with a higher frequency and magnitude of these disasters. The higher impact observed in these nations can be attributed to their lack of resources, knowledge, advanced technology and management, absence of Government working organizations with respect to livestock disaster management system, resulting in serious long lasting impacts on economic and public health of country in question [3]. With this background, an attempt was made to identify the lacunae/constraints in working of organizations associated with disaster like situation. The main aim of the study was also to know the perception of livestock farmers about the preparedness of Govt. agencies during natural disasters and awareness of the farmers regarding such untoward incidents.

Materials and Methods

The present study was purposively carried out in Kashmir Division of Jammu and Kashmir state that was severely hit by a devastating flood in September 2014. Among the various flood affected districts of Kashmir Division, the three districts namely Bandipora, Srinagar and Pulwama were purposively selected based on the highest inundation levels reported in these areas. The Kashmir Division of Jammu and Kashmir State consists of 10 districts. The present study was purposively carried out in three severely flood affected districts viz Pulwama in south, Srinagar in central and Bandipora in north of Kashmir. From each selected district two (2) flood affected blocks were purposively selected based on their livestock population for data collection from affected farmers. Further from each selected block four (4) affected villages were randomly selected for questioning of respondents. Finally ten (10) affected farmers were randomly selected from each of the selected village making a total of two hundred and forty respondents.

Results and Discussion

Information received on livestock disaster management from government agency

The various findings as observed in (table1) indicate that majority of the respondents (74.58%) reported the absence of reception of information from the government agencies with regard to livestock management under disasters. With respect to information received by certain respondents it was reported that these respondents (9.16%) received information on care in feeding of livestock during the disaster followed by respondents who received information on vaccination. The results give a glimpse about the existing veterinary service setup in the study areas with lack of proper information dissemination system especially at the time of disasters.

Perception with regard to information received as valuable and authentic

The findings (table 1) indicated that the rest of the respondents other than the majority who received information perceived it as low in its value and authenticity. The important reason could probably be the infancy level with exposure to the situation and low credibility of respondent's with the personnel's giving such kind of information.

Information received on various aspects and type of inputs/services offered by agencies during the floods of 2014

Results in table 1 indicate that majority of the respondents (62.92%) reported the absence of services offered by Government during the floods of 2014. Among the various districts, Srinagar district received low services as observed from the given table. Perusal of table 1 also showed that majority of the respondents (62.92%) reported the absence of services like veterinary medicine, feed/fodder/mineral mixture and financial services offered by Government during the floods of 2014. It might be due to the fact that Government's relief and rehabilitation measures were focused on humans rather than on animals at the time of disaster.

Amongst the inputs/services provided by Government during floods, conductance of animal health camps was the major service provided by the agencies during that period as reported by (30.41%) of respondents. Interestingly, out of the three districts of the concerned study area, it was found that J&K Government provided financial assistance of Rs 1500/- to Srinagar district only as a compensation for each fully and partially damaged animal houses.

Accessibility of veterinary services from Government agencies

From the findings of below given table 1 it is quite evident that during the floods of 2014, the accessibility of veterinary services from Government agencies was very low as indicated by highest percentage of respondents (91.67%). Interestingly, none of the respondents from each of the three respective districts perceived accessibility of veterinary services from these agencies as high. The scale of disaster was of such a large nature that it called for a huge manpower as is reported that similar flood had occurred in J&K way back 60 years ago. Further the event was marked by unpreparedness which called for greater accessibility as well as of the limited resources available. Interestingly, none of the respondents from Srinagar district perceived accessibility of veterinary services as high. The most probable reason could be high inundation level of the concerned areas of these three districts which made the access to the areas difficult.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to the type and pattern of information & services received on livestock disaster management from Government agencies N=240

Information & Services received from Govt. agencies		Districts			Total
		Srinagar	Bandipora	Pulwama	
i. Reception of information on livestock disaster management					
Received		18 (22.50)	14 (17.50)	29 (36.25)	61 (25.42)
Didn't receive		62 (77.50)	66 (82.50)	51 (63.75)	179 (74.58)
ii. Field/topic of livestock disaster information					
Vaccination of animals		6 (7.50)	3 (3.75)	4 (5.00)	13 (5.41)
Care of pregnant & new born		1 (1.25)	4 (5.00)	5 (6.25)	10 (4.16)
Care of injured & diseased ones		3 (3.75)	5 (6.25)	8 (10.00)	16 (6.66)
Care in feeding		8 (10.00)	2 (2.50)	12 (15.00)	22 (9.16)
Didn't receive		62 (77.50)	66 (82.50)	51 (63.75)	179 (74.58)
iii. Perception about information received					
Valuable	High	0 (0.00)	1 (1.25)	1 (1.25)	2 (0.83)
	Medium	16 (20.00)	11 (13.75)	4 (5.00)	31 (12.92)
	Low	10 (12.50)	13 (16.25)	12 (15.00)	35 (14.58)
Authentic	High	0 (0.00)	1 (1.25)	2 (2.50)	3 (1.25)
	Medium	10 (12.50)	6 (7.50)	2 (2.50)	18 (7.50)
	Low	16 (20.00)	18 (22.50)	13 (16.25)	47 (19.58)
Didn't receive any information		54 (67.50)	55 (68.75)	63 (78.75)	172 (71.67)

iv. Inputs/services in livestock sector offered by Govt. agencies during floods of 2014				
Received	35 (43.75)	24 (30.00)	30 (37.50)	89 (37.08)
Didn't receive	45 (56.25)	56 (70.00)	50 (62.50)	151 (62.92)
v. Type of inputs / services offered by agencies during floods of 2014				
Veterinary Medicine	26 (29.21)	16 (17.97)	21 (23.59)	63 (26.25)
Vaccine	14 (15.73)	17 (19.10)	6 (6.74)	37 (15.42)
Feed / Fodder	10 (11.23)	8 (8.98)	8 (8.98)	26 (10.83)
Animal Health Camps	22 (27.50)	16 (20.00)	35 (43.75)	73(30.41)
Money for animal house	34 (42.50)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	34 (14.17)
Didn't receive any input/service	45 (56.25)	56 (70.00)	50 (62.50)	151 (62.92)
vi. Accessibility of veterinary services from Govt. agencies				
High	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)
Moderate	10 (12.50)	3 (3.75)	7 (8.75)	20 (8.33)
Low	70 (87.50)	77 (96.25)	73 (91.25)	220 (91.67)

(Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage)

Effectiveness of Risk communication

The effectiveness under the study is covered under various variables as discussed below

Perception about services

The services rendered by Government during the floods of 2014 were perceived very poor by majority of respondents (86.25%) on the other hand results also indicate that services offered by local communities were perceived as average by majority of respondents (40.83%). Interestingly, none of the respondents perceived Government services as good. Among different districts, people from Bandipora perceived the services offered by local community to be of good level. The most probable reason could be ill preparation of government agencies with regard to handling of such a similar situation or probably the higher expectation from general masses. Besides the local communities had an edge of proximity and better local support to deliver their services being localite in nature. It seems that local community acted on their own impulses and actually dominated the rescue and recovery efforts at the time of disaster.

Coordination and cooperation among organizations

The results of table 2 indicated that majority of the respondents (92.50%) perceived the coordination and cooperation among various organizations involved in livestock disaster management as of low level. Interestingly, none of the participants perceived coordination and cooperation as high among different organizations. The various agencies involved in the process mentioned seemed to work in isolation with each other as is being reflected in public perception.

Sharing of responsibilities

Since availability of manpower involved in livestock disaster management was very low, that majority of respondents (74.58%) (Table 2) expected manpower to be shared between various organizations while handling livestock during disasters, followed by sharing of information and inputs/resources among the same. The results are similar in findings of Bhanja *et al.*, (1999) [2] who reported that the major problem confronted by Government department was lack of necessary man power, resources and know how to cope up with the challenges.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to their perception about services rendered by organizations during floods in relation to livestock disaster management N=240

Perception aspect		Districts			Total
		Srinagar	Bandipora	Pulwama	
i. Level of satisfaction with services delivered					
Satisfaction level	Agency				
Good	Govt. agencies	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)
	Local community	30 (37.50)	37 (46.25)	28 (35.00)	95 (39.58)
Average	Govt. agencies	12 (15.00)	13 (16.25)	8 (10.00)	33 (13.75)
	Local community	40 (50.00)	27 (33.75)	31 (38.75)	98 (40.83)
Poor	Govt. agencies	68 (85.00)	67 (83.75)	72 (90.00)	207 (86.25)
	Local community	10 (12.50)	16 (20.00)	21(26.25)	47 (19.58)
ii. Extent of coordination and cooperation among organizations in disaster management					
High		0(0.00)	0(0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)
Medium		9 (11.25)	5 (6.25)	4 (5.00)	18 (7.50)
Low		71 (88.75)	75 (93.75)	76 (95.00)	222 (92.50)
iii. Perception about areas to share between organization in disaster management					
Manpower		58 (72.50)	61 (76.25)	60 (75.00)	179 (74.58)
Inputs/Resources		38 (47.50)	51 (63.75)	55 (68.75)	144 (60.00)
Information		46 (57.50)	60 (75.00)	63 (78.75)	169 (70.42)

(Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage)

Type of perceived constraints by respondents in working of organization

Regarding the constraints perceived by farmers with respect to the proper working of organizations in livestock disaster management. Lack of early warning system followed by inadequate emergency medicine and ambulatory clinic facility

were reported as major constraints in disaster risk communications. (Table3). The results are pointer to the fact that an efficient flood forecasting system is lacking in place in the state. Besides the facilities of ambulatory clinic is a distant dream for most of the regions.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents as per their perception with regard to constraints in proper working of organizations dealing with livestock disaster management N=240

Type of constraint	Extent of constraint			Average score	Rank
	High	Medium	Low		
Inadequate manpower/staff	68 (28.33)	60 (25.00)	112 (46.67)	1.81	V
Inadequate financial resources	91 (37.92)	63 (26.25)	86 (35.83)	2.02	IV
Non availability of disaster management tools	153(63.75)	63 (26.25)	24 (10.00)	2.5	III
Inadequate training of field staff	33 (13.75)	50 (20.83)	157 (65.42)	1.48	VI
Inadequate medicine + ambulatory clinic facility	181(75.42)	48 (20.00)	11 (4.58)	2.70	II
Lack of early warning system	204(85.00)	31 (12.92)	5 (2.08)	2.82	I

(Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage)

Conclusion

It is concluded from the findings that majority of the respondents (74.58%) didn't receive information on livestock disaster management from any Government agency/organizations and majority (62.92%) complained about the non-availability of inputs and other services offered by them during the floods of 2014. The accessibility of veterinary services from the Government organizations was perceived as being exceptionally low by majority of respondents (91.67%) The results give a glimpse of the existing veterinary service setup in the study areas with lack of proper information dissemination system especially at the time of disasters and also indicate that the livestock sector is given least priority whenever the disaster (floods) like situation arises, despite of the fact that it serves as a means of drought power and unit of production in building up the nation's economy and infrastructure. The findings indicated that the Coordination and cooperation among various organizations was very low which depicted that the various agencies involved in the rehabilitation process seemed to work in isolation with each other as is being reflected in public perception. The need of the hour is that the agencies sharing a common mandate should have better coordination and cooperation with a visible impact and

that the voluntary Government organizations need to be mobilized and should strengthen their linkage by increasing their manpower and should provide first hand help to livestock owners in terms of livestock risk service delivery and other information related to livestock disaster management. Planning and preparedness response need to be improved and proper channels should be effectively used for better risk communication amongst the livestock owners and also Concerned Government agencies/State agriculture universities and meteorological departments should work together and have a greater coordination for better management of livestock during disasters through an efficient and reliable forecasting mechanism in place. Further, it was concluded that the private agencies and NGOs working for livestock disaster management were totally absent in the respective study areas which is of great concern.

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