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Socio-economic and demographic profile of Sirohi goat owners under field conditions in Malpura and Uniyara tehsils of Tonk district, Rajasthan

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to assess the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of Sirohi goat owners under field conditions in Malpura and Uniyara tehsils of Tonk district, Rajasthan. A total of 120 respondents, comprising 60 goat owners from 4 villages in each tehsil, were selected for the study. Primary information was collected through a structured interview schedule covering religion, age, social category, occupation, education, family type, housing condition, landholding status, grazing practices, grazing land type, migration status and family composition. The findings revealed that the majority of respondents belonged to the Hindu religion (95.00%), while 5.00% belonged to the Muslim religion. Half of the respondents (50.00%) were in the middle-age group (41–57 years), followed by young respondents (28.33%) and old respondents (21.67%). The OBC category constituted the largest social group (41.67%). Agriculture combined with animal husbandry was the predominant occupation (39.17%), followed by agriculture alone (27.50%). Regarding education, 35.83% of respondents had secondary education, while 18.33% were illiterate. Joint families were predominant (58.33%). Half of the respondents lived in pucca houses (50.00%), and 92.50% possessed land. Most respondents grazed goats for 5–7 hours per day (60.83%), with community land being the predominant grazing resource (65.00%). None of the respondents reported seasonal or permanent migration. The average family size was approximately six members, with minor differences between Malpura and Uniyara. The findings indicate that Sirohi goat production in the study area is predominantly integrated with agriculture and is supported by family labour and community grazing resources.

Keywords: Sirohi goat, Socio-economic profile, Farmers, Demographic characteristics, Grazing, Family structure

Introduction

Goat farming is an important component of rural livestock production systems in India and plays a particularly significant role in the livelihood strategies of small, marginal and landless farm households. Goats require comparatively low initial investment, can utilize a wide range of vegetation and crop residues, and are capable of adapting to diverse agro-climatic conditions. Consequently, goat rearing is often integrated with crop production and other livelihood activities, providing households with an additional source of income, employment and food security. In resource-constrained farming systems, goats can serve as an important financial asset because animals can be sold relatively quickly to meet household requirements and emergency expenditures. Indian goat production is therefore closely associated with smallholder farming and livelihood diversification, particularly in areas where availability of land, irrigation and other agricultural resources is limited (Kumar *et al.*, 2010; Devendra, 2012; Bett *et al.*, 2009) [2, 1].

The importance of goats is particularly pronounced in the semi-arid and arid regions of Rajasthan, where livestock production is closely integrated with crop farming and natural grazing resources. The climatic conditions of Rajasthan, including high temperatures, irregular rainfall and seasonal fluctuations in availability of green fodder, place considerable limitations on conventional livestock production. Goats are comparatively well suited to such environments because of their browsing ability, relatively low maintenance requirements and capacity to utilize shrubs, bushes, weeds, tree leaves and other locally available feed resources. Thus, goat production represents an important adaptive livestock enterprise for rural households operating under harsh environmental and resource conditions (Peacock, 2005; Devendra, 2012) [3, 2]. Among the indigenous goat breeds of Rajasthan, Sirohi goat occupies an important position because of its adaptability and production potential under the environmental conditions of the region. The breed is primarily associated with Rajasthan and is reared for both meat and milk production. Sirohi goats are known for their ability to utilize available pasture and locally available feed resources and are commonly maintained under grazing-based or semi-intensive production systems. Their adaptation to local environmental conditions makes them particularly valuable to smallholder farmers who may not have sufficient resources for high-input livestock

production systems. The breed therefore has considerable importance in strengthening livestock-based livelihoods in southern and central parts of Rajasthan (Acharya, 1982; Singh *et al.*, 2008) [4, 5]. The socio-economic characteristics of livestock owners have a substantial influence on the way livestock enterprises are managed. Characteristics such as age, education, occupation, family size, landholding, income, social status, access to credit and contact with extension agencies can affect farmers' knowledge, decision-making ability and willingness to adopt improved livestock-production technologies. Education may improve the ability of farmers to understand technical recommendations, while greater extension contact can improve access to information related to improved feeding, breeding, health care, housing and marketing. Previous studies have demonstrated that farmers' knowledge, education, economic motivation and access to extension services are important factors influencing the adoption of improved goat-production technologies (Kumar *et al.*, 2010; Dossa *et al.*, 2008; Dhaka *et al.*, 2017) [6, 7].

Materials and methods

The present study was conducted in Malpura and Uniyara tehsils of Tonk district, Rajasthan, representing a semi-arid agro-ecological region where mixed crop–livestock farming is an important component of rural livelihoods. A total of 120 Sirohi goat owners were selected for the study, comprising 60 respondents from Malpura and 60 from Uniyara tehsil. Respondents were selected from the identified villages through a suitable sampling procedure, ensuring representation of households actively engaged in Sirohi goat rearing under field conditions. Primary data were collected through personal interviews using a structured and pre-tested interview schedule. Information was obtained regarding the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of respondents, including religion, age, social category, occupation, educational status, family type, housing condition, landholding status, grazing duration, grazing land type, migration status and family composition. The average number of adult males, adult females, male children and female children in each household was also recorded. The collected data were systematically coded, tabulated and analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques. Frequencies and percentages were calculated for categorical variables, whereas mean values were used to summarize family-composition characteristics. The results were compared between Malpura and Uniyara tehsils to identify similarities and differences in the socio-economic and demographic profile of Sirohi goat owners.

Results and discussion

The socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the 120 Sirohi goat owners surveyed in Malpura and Uniyara tehsils of Tonk district, Rajasthan, are presented in Table 1. Overall, the findings indicated that the respondents were predominantly middle-aged, belonged mainly to the OBC category, and relied on agriculture combined with animal husbandry as their principal occupation. Most respondents possessed agricultural land, lived in joint families, and depended substantially on grazing, particularly on community grazing resources. The socio-economic profile of the respondents was broadly similar between Malpura and Uniyara, although minor differences were observed in individual characteristics.

The findings revealed that 95.00% of the respondents belonged to the Hindu religion, while only 5.00% belonged to the Muslim religion. In Malpura, 93.33% of respondents were Hindu and 6.67% were Muslim, compared with 96.67% and 3.33%, respectively, in Uniyara. The predominance of Hindu respondents reflects the demographic composition of the rural population in the study area. A similar predominance of Hindu goat farmers was reported by Kumar *et al.* (2015) [8] in Uttar Pradesh.

Age-wise, middle-aged respondents (41–57 years) constituted the largest group (50.00%), followed by young respondents below 41 years (28.33%) and older respondents above 57 years (21.67%). The proportion of middle-aged respondents was 48.33% in Malpura and 51.67% in Uniyara. The predominance of middle-aged goat owners

suggests that goat farming was largely managed by economically active household members with considerable practical experience in livestock husbandry. Similar findings were reported by Sharma *et al.* (2007) [9] in Rajasthan. Kakraliya *et al.* (2025) [10] also reported a predominance of middle-aged goat farmers in Sirohi district. The presence of a substantial proportion of young respondents, however, indicates scope for promoting goat farming as an enterprise among rural youth through entrepreneurship development, technical training and institutional support.

The OBC category constituted the largest proportion of respondents (41.67%), followed by MBC (19.17%), SC (12.50%), GEN (10.83%), EWS (8.33%) and ST (7.50%). The proportion of OBC respondents was slightly higher in Uniyara (43.33%) than in Malpura (40.00%). The predominance of OBC households indicates that goat rearing represents an important livelihood activity among socially and economically diverse rural communities. Similar findings were reported by Sharma *et al.* (2007) [9] in Rajasthan and Kumar *et al.* (2015) in Uttar Pradesh, where OBC households constituted a substantial proportion of goat-rearing communities.

With respect to occupation, agriculture combined with animal husbandry was the principal occupation of 39.17% of respondents, followed by agriculture alone (27.50%) and animal husbandry alone (18.33%). Only 9.17% and 5.83% of respondents reported service and business, respectively, as their main occupations. The predominance of agriculture plus animal husbandry demonstrates the close integration of goat production with the crop–livestock farming system. Goats can utilize crop residues and locally available vegetation, while manure produced by goats contributes to nutrient recycling in crop production. Similar observations were reported by Sharma *et al.* (2007) [9], who found agriculture and animal husbandry to be important livelihood sources among goat rearers in Rajasthan. Kumar *et al.* (2015) [8] also reported agriculture and animal husbandry as major occupations among goat farmers.

Educational status showed that secondary education was the most common educational level (35.83%), followed by primary education (31.67%), illiteracy (18.33%) and education above secondary level (14.17%). The proportion of respondents with secondary education was 35.00% in Malpura and 36.67% in Uniyara. Thus, more than two-thirds of respondents had received at least primary-level education.

The comparatively better educational status of the respondents provides opportunities for effective dissemination and adoption of improved goat-production technologies. Educated farmers may be better positioned to understand recommendations related to balanced feeding, disease prevention, breeding management, record keeping and marketing. However, the presence of 18.33% illiterate respondents indicates that extension programmes should not rely exclusively on written information. Practical demonstrations, farmer training, audiovisual materials and village-level livestock advisory services may be more effective for reaching all categories of farmers.

The present findings differ from those reported by Kakraliya *et al.* (2025) [10], who observed a considerably higher proportion of illiterate goat farmers in Sirohi tehsil. Such differences may be attributed to variations in sampling locations, educational infrastructure and socio-economic conditions among rural households.

The majority of respondents (58.33%) belonged to joint families, whereas 41.67% belonged to nuclear families. Joint families constituted 60.00% of respondents in Malpura and 56.67% in Uniyara. The predominance of joint families may provide greater availability of family labour for routine goat husbandry operations such as grazing, feeding, watering, cleaning, kid care and monitoring of animal health. Similar findings were reported by Kumar *et al.* (2015) [8], who observed a predominance of joint families among goat farmers. Kakraliya *et al.* (2025) [10] and Vishnoi *et al.* (2022) [11] also reported a substantial prevalence of joint-family households among goat farmers in Rajasthan.

Regarding housing conditions, 50.00% of respondents lived in pucca houses, while 25.00% lived in kaccha houses and 25.00% in mixed

houses. The proportion of respondents living in pucca houses was slightly higher in Malpura (51.67%) than in Uniyara (48.33%). The relatively high proportion of pucca houses indicates moderate improvement in household living conditions. However, residential housing status does not necessarily reflect the quality of livestock shelters. Therefore, improvement in household economic conditions should be accompanied by adoption of scientifically designed goat shelters providing adequate space, ventilation, drainage, sanitation and protection from adverse climatic conditions.

Landholding and grazing practices

The results indicated that 92.50% of respondents possessed agricultural land, whereas only 7.50% were landless. Landholding households accounted for 93.33% in Malpura and 91.67% in Uniyara. The high proportion of landholding households indicates strong integration between crop production and goat rearing. Agricultural land provides opportunities for fodder cultivation and utilization of crop residues, while goat manure can be recycled within the farm.

The finding is broadly consistent with [Sharma et al. \(2007\)](#) [9], who reported that most goat rearers in Rajasthan possessed relatively small landholdings. [Kakraliya et al. \(2025\)](#) [10] similarly reported the predominance of small landholders among goat farmers in Sirohi district. The comparatively low proportion of landless respondents in the present study may be related to the strong crop-livestock integration characteristic of Malpura and Uniyara.

Grazing constituted an important component of goat feeding. About 60.83% of respondents grazed their goats for 5–7 hours per day, while 23.33% grazed them for more than seven hours and 15.83% for less than five hours. The pattern was similar in both tehsils, with 61.67% of respondents in Malpura and 60.00% in Uniyara reporting 5–7 hours of grazing. The substantial dependence on grazing indicates that Sirohi goats are maintained largely under a low-input production system utilizing naturally available vegetation, shrubs, grasses and crop residues. [Roy et al. \(2016\)](#) [12] similarly documented the importance of traditional and low-input production systems among goat owners in India.

Community land was the principal grazing resource, being utilized by 65.00% of respondents, whereas 35.00% grazed their goats on their own land. Dependence on community grazing land was somewhat higher in Uniyara (66.67%) than in Malpura (63.33%). The substantial dependence on common grazing resources highlights their importance in sustaining smallholder goat production, particularly where farmers have limited privately available fodder resources.

However, excessive dependence on common grazing lands may result in overgrazing, seasonal feed shortages and deterioration of pasture quality. Therefore, community-based pasture management, rotational grazing, pasture reseeding, controlled grazing and development of fodder trees could contribute to more sustainable goat production. The importance of community-based and low-input goat production systems has also been reported by [Kumaravelu et al. \(2025\)](#) [13].

A notable finding was that all respondents (100.00%) reported no migration. Neither Malpura nor Uniyara respondents reported seasonal or permanent migration. This indicates that goat keeping was conducted as a locally based livelihood activity and that the households maintained relatively stable residence within their villages. The absence of migration may also facilitate regular participation in village-level extension programmes, veterinary services and farmer training activities.

Family composition of Sirohi goat owners

The average family composition of the respondents is presented in [Table 2](#). The average number of adult males was 2.08 in Malpura and 2.12 in Uniyara, while the corresponding figures for adult females

were 1.96 and 2.01, respectively. The average number of male children below 18 years was 1.03 in Malpura and 0.96 in Uniyara, whereas female children averaged 0.88 and 0.91, respectively.

The average number of total male family members was 3.11 in Malpura and 3.08 in Uniyara, while the corresponding figures for total female members were 2.84 and 2.92. Thus, the average household size was approximately six members in both tehsils. The relatively similar family composition indicates that the demographic structure of goat-owning households was broadly comparable between Malpura and Uniyara.

The availability of adult family members represents an important resource for smallholder goat production because many activities are traditionally performed using family labour. Grazing, feeding, watering, cleaning, kid care and routine health monitoring can be undertaken by different members of the household, thereby reducing dependence on hired labour. The findings are broadly comparable with those reported by [Vishnoi et al. \(2022\)](#) [11] and [Kakraliya et al. \(2025\)](#) [10], who documented medium-sized and joint-family structures among goat-rearing households in Rajasthan.

Comparative assessment of Malpura and Uniyara

Overall, the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of Sirohi goat owners in Malpura and Uniyara were largely comparable, with only minor differences between the two tehsils. Uniyara had slightly higher proportions of middle-aged respondents, secondary-educated respondents and OBC households, whereas Malpura had a slightly higher proportion of young respondents and farmers reporting animal husbandry as their main occupation. The predominance of agriculture combined with animal husbandry, high proportion of landholding households and extensive use of community grazing land demonstrate that goat production is strongly integrated with the existing rural farming system. The findings are generally consistent with previous studies conducted in Rajasthan and other parts of India, which have highlighted the importance of middle-aged farmers, family labour, agriculture-livestock integration, small landholdings and grazing-based management in goat production systems ([Sharma et al., 2007](#); [Kumar et al., 2015](#); [Roy et al., 2016](#); [Vishnoi et al., 2022](#)) [9, 8, 12, 11].

Overall interpretation

The study established that Sirohi goat farming in Malpura and Uniyara tehsils represents a smallholder, family-based, agriculture-linked and grazing-oriented livestock enterprise. The typical respondent was a middle-aged farmer, predominantly belonging to the OBC category, engaged in agriculture along with animal husbandry, living in a joint family and possessing agricultural land. Goats were primarily maintained through several hours of daily grazing, with community land serving as the major grazing resource. These characteristics indicate that Sirohi goats have considerable potential to support rural livelihoods under the semi-arid conditions of Tonk district. However, improvement in productivity and profitability will depend on strengthening the existing production system through farmer education, scientific management, fodder development, sustainable community grazing, veterinary support, improved breeding services, institutional credit and better market linkages. Thus, future livestock-development programmes should adopt an integrated and location-specific approach that combines technical interventions with institutional and socio-economic support to improve the sustainability and profitability of Sirohi goat farming in Rajasthan.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents on the basis of religion ($n = 120$)

S. No.	Parameters		Malpura		Uniyara		Total	
			F	%	F	%	F	%
1.	Religion	Hindu	56	93.33	58	96.67	114	95.00
		Muslim	4	6.67	2	3.33	6	5.00
2.	Age Group	Young (< 41 years)	18	30.00	16	26.67	34	28.33
		Middle (41–57 years)	29	48.33	31	51.67	60	50.00
		Old (> 57 years)	13	21.67	13	21.67	26	21.67
3.	Category	SC	8	13.33	7	11.67	15	12.50
		ST	5	8.33	4	6.67	9	7.50
		OBC	24	40.00	26	43.33	50	41.67
		MBC	11	18.33	12	20.00	23	19.17
		EWS	5	8.33	5	8.33	10	8.33
4.	Main Occupation	GEN	7	11.67	6	10.00	13	10.83
		Service	5	8.33	6	10.00	11	9.17
		Business	4	6.67	3	5.00	7	5.83
		Agriculture	16	26.67	17	28.33	33	27.50
		Animal Husbandry	12	20.00	10	16.67	22	18.33
5.	Education Level	Agriculture + Animal Husbandry	23	38.33	24	40.00	47	39.17
		Illiterate	12	20.00	10	16.67	22	18.33
		Primary	18	30.00	20	33.33	38	31.67
		Secondary	21	35.00	22	36.67	43	35.83
		Above Secondary	9	15.00	8	13.33	17	14.17
6.	Family Type	Joint	36	60.00	34	56.67	70	58.33
		Nuclear	24	40.00	26	43.33	50	41.67
7.	Type of House	Kaccha	14	23.33	16	26.67	30	25.00
		Pakka	31	51.67	29	48.33	60	50.00
		Mixed	15	25.00	15	25.00	30	25.00
8.	Land Holding Status	Land holding	56	93.33	55	91.67	111	92.50
		Landless	4	6.67	5	8.33	9	7.50
9.	Grazing Time	< 5 hours	9	15.00	10	16.67	19	15.83
		5–7 hours	37	61.67	36	60.00	73	60.83
		> 7 hours	14	23.33	14	23.33	28	23.33
10.	Grazing Land Type	Own land	22	36.67	20	33.33	42	35.00
		Community land	38	63.33	40	66.67	78	65.00
11.	Migration Status	Yes	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
		No	60	100.00	60	100.00	120	100.00

F = frequency, % = per cent

Table 2. Distribution of respondents on the basis of average number of family members

S. No.	Tehsil	Adult Male	Adult Female	Child Male (< 18 yrs)	Child Female (< 18 yrs)	Total Male	Total Female
1	Malpura	2.08	1.96	1.03	0.88	3.11	2.84
2	Uniyara	2.12	2.01	0.96	0.91	3.08	2.92

Conclusion

The present study provides an overview of the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of Sirohi goat owners in Malpura and Uniyara tehsils of Tonk district, Rajasthan. The findings revealed that goat farming was predominantly practiced by middle-aged farmers, with the majority belonging to the OBC category and following agriculture combined with animal husbandry as their principal occupation. Most respondents possessed agricultural land and lived in joint families, indicating that goat production was closely integrated with crop farming and supported substantially by family labour. Secondary education constituted the most common educational level, although a proportion of respondents remained illiterate, indicating the need for easily accessible and practical extension approaches. Goat rearing

was primarily based on grazing, with most farmers allowing their animals to graze for 5–7 hours per day. Community grazing land was the principal grazing resource, emphasizing the importance of common-property resources in sustaining the local goat production system. All respondents reported non-migration, suggesting that goat farming contributes to a stable, village-based livelihood. The relatively similar socio-economic characteristics observed between Malpura and Uniyara indicate that both areas have broadly comparable goat production systems, although minor differences occurred in occupation, education, family structure and grazing practices. Overall, Sirohi goat production in the study area can be characterized as a smallholder, family-based, agriculture-linked and grazing-oriented production system. The findings highlight considerable potential for improving household livelihoods through scientific goat management. However,

future development programmes should give greater emphasis to farmer training, improved fodder production and conservation, sustainable management of community grazing lands, scientific breeding, preventive healthcare, improved housing and access to institutional credit and organized markets. Particular attention should be given to strengthening extension services and developing practical, low-cost technologies suitable for semi-arid farming conditions. An integrated approach involving farmers, veterinary institutions, agricultural extension agencies and local development organizations would help improve productivity, profitability and sustainability of Sirohi goat farming in Tonk district, Rajasthan.

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