Prioritization of constraints faced by different marketing functionaries in the organised cattle fairs of Rajasthan

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ABSTRACT
State level cattle fairs of Rajasthan play an important role in the socio-economic matrix of the state. In spite of the importance of these cattle fairs, number of both assembled and transacted animals has been decreasing over the years due to several constraints. The present study was conducted during 2011 to identify the constraints faced by different marketing functionaries in the state level cattle fairs. According to sellers, lack of infrastructure, inadequate feeds and fodder availability at fair, unremunerative margin, difficulty in transportation, lack of sanitation, lack of market information, harassment at check points, lack of security at night and difficulty to convince buyers were major constraints. Buyers on the other hand reported lack of infrastructure, inadequate feed and fodder availability, delay in “Rawana” (departure date), high market price of animals, malpractices, difficulty in transportation, lack of sanitation, lack of market information, harassment at check points and lack of security at night as some important constraints in the state level cattle fairs of Rajasthan.

Key words: Constraint, Market Information, Malpractices, Transportation.

INTRODUCTION
According to the 18th Livestock Census (2007), Rajasthan has 57.89 million livestock out of which bovine constitutes 23.95 million (12.41 million cattle and 11.54 million buffaloes). For livestock marketing, 10 state level cattle fairs are organised every year by the Directorate of Animal Husbandry, Government of Rajasthan in different parts of the state. These state level cattle fairs play a significant role in the socio-economic matrix of the state. These cattle fairs provide an important platform for the transaction of different species of livestock not only to the farmers and traders of the state but also to other neighbouring states, thus augmenting their income. In spite of the significance of these cattle fairs in the life of rural people, it has been seen that both the number of assembled and transacted animals has been decreasing over the years. These declining trends have posed a serious question mark on the popularity of these cattle fairs for the transaction of different livestock species. There are many underlying constraints faced by different marketing functionaries in these fairs that are responsible for such a state of affair. The present investigation was carried out with the objective of identifying different constraints faced by sellers and buyers and prioritizing these constraints in order of rank for early eradication by the policy planners of the state.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
For taking the response of sellers and buyers regarding the constraints, multistage sampling technique was adopted. Out of the 10 cattle fairs, 4 cattle fairs i.e., Ramdev (Nagaur), Veer Tejaji (Parbatsar), Jaswant (Bharatpur) and Puskar (Ajmer) were selected due to the highest average number of bovine transaction during the last ten years i.e., 2000-01 to 2009-10. Further a sample of 30 sellers and 30 buyers from each cattle fair/market were selected randomly leading to a total sample of 120 sellers and 120 buyers during the study period (2011). Garret’s Ranking Technique (Garret, 1979) was used to rank the reasons/constraints faced by sellers and buyers. The respondents were asked to assign rank to different constraints faced by them. The ranks were then converted into percent position with the help of following formula:

Percent position = \frac{100(R_j-0.50)}{N_j}

Where,
- \( R_j \) = Rank given for \( j^{th} \) reason/constraint and \( j^{th} \) individual
- \( N_j \) = Number of reasons/constraints ranked by the \( j^{th} \) individual

The percent position of each rank was then converted into scores by referring to the table given by Garret. Thereafter, for each constraint, the scores of individual respondents were added and divided by the total number of respondents. The mean score for all the constraints were arranged in descending order and thus, rank were assigned to each constraint.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Constraints faced by sellers

There were several constraints (Table 1) reported by the sellers in the state level cattle fairs of Rajasthan. These constraints are presented in the ensuing sections in order of rank calculated on the basis of mean score obtained by using Garret’s Ranking Technique.

Lack of infrastructure: Cattle fairs were found to be organised at large open places. However, there were no major permanent infrastructural facilities especially night shelters and people had to spend the night under open sky except few who could manage tent for themselves. Animal sheds were also completely absent. There were no facilities for safe drinking water and adequate light at night in most of the fairs. Inadequate infrastructure was the most important constraint for sellers with an overall mean score of 74.81. Lack of infrastructure in the animal markets was also reported as major constraint by Aiyasamy et al. (1980) in Tamilnadu, Khan and Sonad (1998) in Karnatak, Beohar et al. (2007) in Madhya Pradesh.

Inadequate feeds and fodder availability at fair: Inadequate availability of feeds and fodder for animals was the second important constraint from sellers’ point of view with a mean score of 69.05. Most of the sellers reported shortage of feeds and fodder and its higher price as one of the important problems. Therefore, animals were found to be under fed. Pandit and Dhaka (2004) while conducting a study in the livestock markets of West Bengal also reported shortage of feeds and fodder as an important constraint.

Un-remunerative margin: The third constraint for sellers was un-remunerative price or margin with a mean score of 56.55. According to sellers, they had to incur high cost on transportation and feeding and therefore, the price they realised did not ensure enough margins to them. Rajarajan and Dhaka (2003) also found un-remunerative prices of milch animals as an important problem faced by sellers.

Difficulty in animal transportation: Many sellers were found to have come from distant places of Rajasthan and other states, therefore, transportation of animals was costly for them. It was the fourth constraint for sellers with a mean score of 53.87. Many sellers, therefore, prefer to sell their animals in local unorganised markets.

Lack of hygiene and sanitation in market yard: Lack of hygiene and sanitation in fair premises was the fifth problem (mean score 47.96) for sellers especially during rainy season because of water logging and mud. There were no hygienic places for bath in most of the fairs.

Lack of market information: Lack of market information with regard to prices of animals was the sixth problem (mean score 39.86) because of which there were variations in sale prices of same breed of animal in the same market. Rajarajan and Dhaka (2003) in the cattle markets of Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu, also found un-remunerative prices of milch animals as an important problem faced by sellers.

Harassment at check points: Harassment at check points was reported to be the seventh constraint having the overall mean score of 39.54. According to sellers of other states, police used to ask money from them at check points for giving pass to animals.

Lack of security at night: Lack of security at night was reported to be the eighth constraint faced by sellers with an overall mean score of 26.27. There was chance of money getting stolen especially at night.

Difficulty to convince buyers: Difficulty to convince buyers about the quality of animals especially about milk yield, order of lactation, draft capacity and age was another constraint reported by sellers. This constraint was ranked at ninth position with a mean score of 21.60.

Constraints faced by buyers

Most of the constraints faced by buyers (Table 2) were similar to the constraints faced by the sellers. These are discussed in detail in the ensuing paragraphs on the basis of their order of rank determined by mean score.

Lack of infrastructure: Like the sellers, buyers also reported inadequate infrastructure especially night shelter, animal shed and safe drinking water facility as the most important constraint. It was found to be the dominant constraint for buyers with a mean score of 74.81. Inadequate infrastructure in the animal markets was also reported as major constraint by Aiyasamy et al. (1980) in Tamilnadu, Khan and Sonad (1998) in Karnataka, Beohar et al. (2007) in Madhya Pradesh.

TABLE 1: Mean score for constraints reported by sellers and the associated ranks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of constraints</th>
<th>Jaswant (n=30)</th>
<th>Ramdev (n=30)</th>
<th>Veer Tejaji (n=30)</th>
<th>Puuskar (n=30)</th>
<th>Overall (N=120)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean Score</td>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>Mean Score</td>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>Mean Score</td>
<td>Rank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of infrastructure</td>
<td>66.53</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>75.93</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>79.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate feeds and fodder availability at fair</td>
<td>79.46</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>66.73</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>65.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of market information</td>
<td>40.63</td>
<td>VI</td>
<td>40.85</td>
<td>VI</td>
<td>40.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in animal transportation</td>
<td>54.19</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>55.11</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>53.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of hygiene and sanitation in market yard</td>
<td>47.92</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>49.40</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>47.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Un-remunerative margin</td>
<td>57.21</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>54.12</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>56.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harassment at check points</td>
<td>38.47</td>
<td>VII</td>
<td>38.47</td>
<td>VII</td>
<td>38.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty to convince buyers</td>
<td>20.63</td>
<td>IX</td>
<td>22.29</td>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>19.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of security at night</td>
<td>29.28</td>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>21.76</td>
<td>IX</td>
<td>27.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lack of security at night was a problem in order of priority as reported by buyers with a mean score of 74.55 as also reported by the sellers.

Inadequate feeds and fodder availability at fair: Inadequate availability of feeds and fodder was also reported to be the second important constraint by buyers with a mean score of 74.55 as also reported by the sellers.

Delay in “Rawana” (departure date): The third constraint reported by buyers was delay in departure date i.e., ‘Rawana’ which was fixed by authority with a mean score of 60.52. According to authority, the main reason for delay of ‘Rawana’ was the minimum duration of fair. If the buyers were allowed to leave the fair site immediately after purchase, then the interest and popularity of fair would be lost as only a few people would be left at the fair site.

High market price: Relatively higher price of bovine especially that of reputed breeds like Murrah buffalo, Nagori bullock and crossbreed cattle was reported to be the fourth constraint for buyers with a mean score of 53.29.

Malpractices adopted by sellers: Various malpractices adopted by sellers were reported to be the fifth constraint (mean score 53.20) faced by buyers at fair sites. According to buyers, sellers usually fed their animals extra ration before sale to make them healthy. Even the milch animals were not milked before sale so as to have the udder appearing healthy. Minhas (1966) in Punjab, Rajarajan and Dhaka (2003) in Tamil Nadu, and Pandit and Dhaka in West Bengal (2004) also reported malpractices by sellers as one of the constraints faced by buyers at animal markets.

 Difficulty in animal transportation: Like sellers, buyers had also reported the problem of difficulty in transportation of animals. Transportation problem was found to be the sixth important constraint for buyers with a mean score of 46.06.

Lack of hygiene and sanitation in the market yard: Lack of hygiene and sanitation in fair premises was the seventh problem in order of priority as reported by buyers with a mean score of 35.92.

**Lack of market information:** Lack of market information especially with regard to prices of animals was ranked as the eighth problem (mean score 34.77) by buyers. Buyers often get confused about the reasonable price of a particular breed at the fair site. Price of an animal was largely found to depend on the bargaining capacity of buyers.

**Harassment at check points:** Harassment at check points was reported to be the ninth constraint (mean score 22.81) faced by buyers especially outsiders. Grover et al. (1997) in Haryana also reported unnecessary harassment and charges by police personnel at check posts as an important constraint.

**Lack of security at night:** Lack of security at night was reported to be the tenth constraint faced by buyers with an overall mean score of 21.88.

**CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

The present study revealed that state level cattle fairs of Rajasthan not only provide an important platform for transaction of different livestock species, but also reflects the socio-cultural life of Rajasthan. Being state controlled, brokers were prohibited and market fees/taxes for animals were negligible as compared to unorganised markets. In spite of these benefits lack of infrastructure, inadequate availability of feeds and fodder, difficulty in transportation, lack of sanitation, absence of market information system, harassment at check points etc. were reported to be some important common problems faced by both sellers and buyers in the cattle fairs. Though some constraints such as transportation difficulty, malpractices adopted and inadequate feed and fodder availability cannot be solved totally by the government, but some concrete steps can be taken to address some of the problems by improving infrastructure facilities, maintaining sanitation, establishing market information system especially on prices and arrivals of different kinds of animals on day to day basis and solving the problem of harassment at check points. These steps would definitely give a chance to the state government in restoring the confidence of different stakeholders on these cattle fairs.

### TABLE 2: Mean score for constraints reported by buyers and the associated ranks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of constraints</th>
<th>Jaswant (n=30)</th>
<th>Ramdev (n=30)</th>
<th>Veer Tejaji (n=30)</th>
<th>Pauskar (n=30)</th>
<th>Overall (N=120)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of infrastructure</td>
<td>75.03</td>
<td>76.21</td>
<td>76.00</td>
<td>77.27</td>
<td>76.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate feeds and fodder availability at fair</td>
<td>75.56</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>74.75</td>
<td>74.58</td>
<td>74.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of market information</td>
<td>36.41</td>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>33.51</td>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>34.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delay in departure date</td>
<td>59.83</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>59.67</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>61.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in animal transportation</td>
<td>45.52</td>
<td>VII</td>
<td>46.17</td>
<td>VI</td>
<td>46.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malpractices adopted by seller</td>
<td>53.83</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>54.62</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>52.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of hygiene and sanitation in market yard</td>
<td>36.53</td>
<td>VI</td>
<td>34.12</td>
<td>VII</td>
<td>36.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High market price</td>
<td>53.00</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>51.62</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>53.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harassment at check points</td>
<td>24.22</td>
<td>IX</td>
<td>21.22</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>22.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of security at night</td>
<td>21.24</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>21.52</td>
<td>IX</td>
<td>22.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean scores and ranks are provided for each constraint, with the constraint with the highest mean score being ranked first. The overall mean score for all constraints is 21.88.
REFERENCES