

ANIMAL WELFARE. I. TYPES AND EXTENT OF CRUELITIES COMMONLY INFLICTED ON FARM ANIMALS

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The study was conducted to determine the types and extent of cruelties inflicted on various species of farm animals in both city and suburban areas located within the radius of 12-15 km from the centre of Faisalabad city. Five hundred observations comprising 60% from city and the rest from suburban areas were made by conducting personal interviews and by making personal observations. The extent of cruelties like beating during milking in cows and buffaloes was 24.79 and 41.60%, respectively. Overloading cases in draught animals such as donkeys, mules, horses and camels were 57.9, 65.5, 48.0 and 61.2%, respectively. Numerous other cruelties such as overcrowding and rough handling during transportation were also taken into consideration.

INTRODUCTION

Like human beings, animals are also valuable living creatures and need stress-free environment for better performance. They have feelings like us but cannot express. Cruelty to animals is not only inhumane but also it disturbs the objectives which we want to achieve from these animals. During early times, under the common law, cruelty to animals was not considered a crime. However, at the present time, many countries have formed societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals and humane law enforcement where torturing or tormenting animals has been declared a criminal offence. It thus seems our moral responsibility to take care of their feelings which is greatly emphasized in Islamic teachings too. During recent years, animal welfare, by and large has gained a lot of importance especially in European and North American countries. Intensive livestock production system and increasing demand for animal products appear to be worsening the situation. Therefore, the present study was

planned to determine the types and extent of cruelties commonly inflicted on farm animals.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A survey was conducted in and around Faisalabad city within the radius of 12-15 km from the centre of the city, using a pretested interview schedule. The survey was carried out in peak winter (December-January) and summer (May-June) seasons. Five hundred observations were made from the city and suburban areas. Animals working/moving on or along the road, housed at farm houses, grazing in the fields and those at slaughterhouse were observed. Animals being transported and those in market were also observed. The data concerning the following aspects having a relationship to cruelty were collected:

1. Excessive beating during milking/working
2. Overloading draught animals
3. Rough handling during transportation

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Beating during milking/working: In all, 103 buffaloes, 121 cattle and 97 goats were observed in city and suburb areas during summer and winter seasons. Of these, 40.0, 30.2 and 14.8% of buffaloes, cattle and goats, respectively were found under stress of beating during milking during summer season in city areas. During winter season in city areas, beating during milking in buffaloes rose from 40.0 to 48.5% while in cattle and goats, a downward trend was noticed. Overall beating during milking in buffaloes and cattle was higher in city areas than suburbs. The main causes of more beating in cities during milking are:

- a. Holding of milk due to inflamed or injured udder and/or teats, hard milkers or improper use of oxytocin especially in buffalo.
- b. Management of buffaloes/cows in cities is mostly done by hired labour who may not be as affectionate to the animals or as careful as the owners themselves and thus often resort to unnecessary beating of animals.

According to the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (1937), if any person beats or otherwise treats any animal so as to subject it to unnecessary pain or suffering, he shall be punished with fine which may extend to fifty rupees (about one pound) or may be imprisoned upto one month.

Overall, 27.3, 24.5, 19.2 and 10.58% donkeys, mules, horses and camels, respectively were found under stress of beating during working. The highest incidence during working was found in donkeys followed by mules, horses and camels. Beating of draught animals during working was mainly because of haulage of more weight than their capacity and to make them move fast to complete the job earlier so that another round could be availed. Work animals were

also found exposed to beating during medication especially during drenching, without having properly restrained the animal. Overworked, exhausted and emaciated animals also become the victims of cruel beating. Within the framework of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (1937), unnecessary beating the animals would be considered a punishable offence.

Overloading draught animals: The data showed that a higher percentage of donkeys, mules, horses and bullocks were overloaded in suburban areas than in city areas. It was observed that 62.3, 73.9, 55.5 and 26.8% donkeys, mules, horses and bullocks were found overloaded in suburbs while 54.4, 57.7, 42.2 and 17.7% donkeys, mules, horses and bullocks, respectively were seen overloaded in city areas. Camel in city areas was found to be 66.6% overloaded in contrast to 50.0% in suburbs. A comparison of the data showed that during winter season, higher percentage of animals was overloaded than in summer season. This could be due to low environmental temperature in winter leading to less stress on the animals. Maximum permissible weight for different animals is given in Table 1 as a guideline.

Rough handling during transportation: It was found that 23.8, 22.8, 58.5, 38.2 and 47.9% buffaloes, cattle, sheep, goats and poultry birds, respectively in city areas and 22.5, 14.3, 47.20, 40.5 and 50.0% of the corresponding species in suburbs were exposed to overcrowding and rough handling at loading and unloading time, especially the meat animals. It was also noticed that middlemen make a very rough and abusive handling of animals during transportation of market and transit animals. In markets, they do not take proper care to protect animals from inclement weather. Careless handling, overcrowding and long hours of transportation without feeding and watering cause severe stress to the animals while some of

Table 1. Maximum permissible weight for different animals

Description of animal-driven vehicle	Maximum permissible weight	
Cart (wooden tyres) with one bullock	20 Maunds	(800 kg)
Cart (wooden tyres) with two bullocks	35 Maunds	(1400 kg)
Cart (inflated rubber tyres) with one bullock	30 Maunds	(1200 kg)
Cart (inflated rubber tyres) with two bullocks	50 Maunds	(2000 kg)
Pony Rehra with wooden tyres	6 Maunds	(240 kg) + 1 driver
Pony Rehra with solid rubber tyres	8 Maunds	(320 kg) + 1 driver
Pony Rehra with inflated rubber tyres	10 Maunds	(400 kg) + 1 driver
Camel cart with wooden tyres	35 Maunds	(1400 kg)
Camel cart with inflated rubber tyres	50 Maunds	(2000 kg)
Donkey cart with inflated rubber tyres	5 Maunds	(200 kg)
Mule cart with wooden tyres	12 Maunds	(480 kg)
Mule cart with solid rubber tyres	15 Maunds	(600 kg)
Mule cart with inflated rubber tyres	20 Maunds	(800 kg)
Tonga	4 passengers and 1 driver	

them may even succumb to the injuries/fractures caused during transit.

The sheep and poultry appeared to suffer the most during transportation and marketing because they can be caught easily from wool/wings, often leading to bruised body tissues. keeping in view the stress/injuries caused by rough and abusive handling of farm animals. Mews (1980) emphasised the need for adequate training of transport and abattoir workers.

The data collected in respect of carelessness towards wounded, inflamed and lame animals, wandering animals, use of

goad on draught animals, induced fighting, teasing/beating animals by children and certain other aspects would be presented in Part II of this article.

REFERENCES

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- Mews, A.R. 1980. The Amerdown Group report on the transport and slaughter of farm animals. *Meat Hygienist*, 28: 2-9. (*Vet. Bull.* 51 (5): 2827, 1981).