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28.	FORMULATION AND EVALUATION OF CUCUMIS SATIVUS SEED BASED INCORPORATED READY MADE KANJI FOR DIABETIC PATIENTS <i>G.C.Gilbis Tamil Priya^{1,2,3}, Yasmin^{1,3}</i>	91
29.	INFLUENCE OF SELECTED MINERALS ON COCOON AND SILK CHARACTERS OF SILKWORM, <i>BOMBYX MORI</i> L. <i>D.Jeba Jini¹ and Dr..M.Ramani Bai*</i>	94
30.	A STUDY ON THE PHYTOREMEDIATION OF HEAVY METALS BY USING, <i>BRASSICA JUNCEA</i> (INDIAN MUSTARD) PLANT. <i>D.Dayana Jebamalar, Dr.M.Ramani Bai*</i>	97
31.	POTENTIAL SEAWEED-DERIVED BIOACTIVE COMPOUNDS FOR BIOLOGICAL AND THERAPEUTIC APPLICATIONS <i>D.Beula Shiny and J.Vijila Jasmin</i>	100
32.	IMPACT OF <i>PONGAMIA PINNATA</i> L. EXTRACT ON THE TUKRA INFESTED MULBERRY LEAVES AND NUTRITIONAL PARAMETERS OF SILKWORM, <i>BOMBYX MORI</i> L. <i>T. Baby Dayana^a, D. Dayana Jebamalar^b and Dr. M. Ramani Baia*</i>	103
33.	PHYTOCHEMICAL AND ORGANOLEPTIC PROPERTIES OF <i>BORASSUS FLABELLIFER</i> SPROUT MILK <i>T.Sherin Mary^{1,2,3} and J.Vijila Jasmin^{2,3}</i>	107
34.	BIODEGRADATION OF POLYTHENES BY PSEUDOMONAS AND BACILLUS SPECIES ISOLATED FROM DUMPED SOIL AREA <i>Sujithra. S, M.Jenifer Tamizharasi, T.Sindu Kumari, Lekshmi and Dr. T. Kumaran</i>	111
35.	BARRIERS OF CROSS CULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN MULTINATIONAL FIRMS <i>Archana. H, Lt. Dr.Jagathish</i>	115 ✓
36.	REVIEW OF CATTLE STRUCTURE HELD BY DAIRY FARMERS IN KERALA <i>Shajeela Rani A, Dr. Antony Raj P</i>	119 ✓
37.	CONSUMER PERCEPTION TOWARDS BRANDED CLOTHES AMONG YOUNGSTERS <i>Anjumol Sasi, Lt.Dr.MJagathish</i>	121 ✓
38.	THE IMPORTANCE OF ONLINE PURCHASE AND ONLINE PAYMENT DURING COVID 19. <i>Merlin k joseph* and Dr. M Jagathish**</i>	124 ✓
39.	AWARENESS AND SATISFACTION ON INVESTMENT AVENUES OF HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO KAYAMKULAM VILLAGE: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY <i>Mubarak S. A* & Dr H. Sabeena Parveen*</i>	127 ✓
40.	A STUDY ON WORK LIFE BALANCE OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES IN BANKS IN TRIVANDRUM DISTRICT <i>Soumya. S, Dr. M. P. Asha Kumari</i>	130 ✓
41.	A STUDY ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GRIEVANCE HANDLING MECHANISM IN SIDCO <i>Vidya V.J* & Dr. A. Safia**</i>	133 ✓
42.	A STUDY ON CONSUMERS PURCHASING DECISIONS REGARDING "SEVEN GREEN PRODUCTS" <i>B. Abilasrin, Dr.H.Sabeena Farveen</i>	136 ✓

REVIEW OF CATTLE STRUCTURE HELD BY DAIRY FARMERS IN KERALA

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Abstract

This article examines the intricate cattle structure among Kerala's dairy farmers, analyzing distribution patterns and their economic implications. Palakkad emerges as a key hub with the highest cattle percentage (12.35%), followed by Thrissur and Kollam. This distribution holds significant potential for dairy production, employment, and economic growth. The research underscores the importance of targeted policies to address regional disparities, promote sustainable practices, and enhance rural livelihoods. By comprehensively exploring cattle composition, breed preferences, and their socioeconomic influence, the study offers insights into the nuanced dynamics of Kerala's dairy sector.

Keywords: Cattle Structure, economic implications, Kerala dairy sector, Cattle Composition

Introduction

Kerala's dairy farmers play a pivotal role in the state's agriculture, shaped by its unique geography and economy. This intricate relationship between dairy farming and rural livelihoods underscores the importance of understanding cattle structure. Against Kerala's agrarian backdrop, the composition of cattle held by dairy farmers holds significance, impacting milk production, employment, food security, and sustainability. This study delves into diverse dimensions of cattle structure, exploring breed diversity, herd management, and economic implications. By understanding these intricacies, the research sheds light on how cattle structure influences dairy farming's resilience and sustainability in Kerala's dynamic agricultural landscape.

Statement of the Problem

The study addresses the challenge of understanding the intricacies of cattle structure held by dairy farmers in Kerala. Despite the growing milk production, the economic benefits for farmers remain uncertain. Escalating feed costs, disease vulnerabilities, and ecological implications of cattle rearing pose critical issues. The lack of comprehensive insights into cattle composition, breed preferences, and their economic impact hinders informed decision-making. Consequently, there's a need to delve into the underlying problems of cattle distribution, its role in farmers' income, and the broader implications for sustainable dairy farming. This study aims to bridge the gap in knowledge regarding the multifaceted problem of cattle structure in Kerala's dairy sector.

Objectives

1. To analyse the distribution of cattle in each district in Kerala.
2. To assess economic implications and livelihood dynamics.

Review of Literature

1. (G et al., 2021) The research assessed genetic diversity among seven cattle genetic groups in Kerala, India, including native and crossbred varieties. Microsatellite markers revealed higher alleles, distinct differences in Vilwadri and Kasaragod cattle, and good genetic differentiation. Admixture was observed only in Vadakara population.
2. (G et al., 2018) analyzed genetic diversity between Kerala's Vechur cattle, known for short stature, and crossbred Sunandini cattle. Microsatellite markers showed high diversity, with slight inbreeding in Vechur. Crossbred differentiation was evident, revealing distinct clusters.

Research Design

This research aims to analyse the cattle structure held by dairy farmers in Kerala using secondary data sources. Secondary data, collected and compiled by various governmental and non-governmental



organizations, will be utilized to gain insights into cattle composition, breed distribution, economic implications, and related factors.

Data Collection

Secondary data has sourced from published reports, research papers, surveys, and databases pertaining to cattle rearing, dairy farming, and livestock economics in Kerala. Descriptive analysis was employed to summarize the secondary data.

Results and Discussions

1. Distribution of Cattle in each district of Kerala

Table 1 presents the distribution of cattle in each district of Kerala, showcasing the cattle population and its percentage contribution. The data highlights the variation in cattle numbers across districts, revealing Palakkad with the highest percentage share, contributing significantly to the state's total cattle population. Data source: Livestock Census 2019.

Table 1 Distribution of Cattle in each district of Kerala

S.L No.	District	Cattle (No.)	Percentage
1	Alappuzha	79370	5.87
2	Ernakulam	108061	7.99
3	Idukki	97395	7.20
4	Kannur	91687	6.77
5	Kasaragod	73968	5.47
6	Kollam	110542	8.18
7	Kottayam	81074	5.99
8	Kozhikode	94248	6.97
9	Malappuram	87035	6.43
10	Palakkad	166952	12.35
11	Pathanamthitta	61157	4.52
12	Thiruvananthapuram	98822	7.31
13	Thrissur	111932	8.28
14	Wayanad	79753	5.9
15	Total	1353209	100

Source: Livestock census 2019

The table illustrates the distribution of cattle across Kerala's districts. Palakkad stands out with the highest cattle percentage (12.35%), followed by Thrissur (8.28%) and Kollam (8.18%). This insight aids in understanding regional livestock preferences, potentially guiding breeding and conservation efforts. Data source: Livestock Census 2019.

2. Economic implications and livelihood dynamics

Cattle distribution in Kerala's districts drives economic implications and livelihood dynamics. Higher cattle percentages in regions like Palakkad and Thrissur offer potential for dairy, employment, and growth. This influences milk production, dairy industry development, and livelihood diversification, aiding targeted policies for sustainable rural development in line with state goals. Data source: Livestock Census 2019.

Conclusion

The study delves into Kerala's cattle structure within dairy farming, revealing distribution disparities. Palakkad leads in cattle percentage (12.35%), impacting dairy production and economic prospects. Thrissur and Kollam follow, showcasing potential for employment and growth. The research emphasizes tailored policies to address regional variations, foster sustainability, and elevate rural livelihoods.

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