



Sustainable Livestock Management Practices Among Ethiopian Highlands Herders: A Qualitative Study

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Abstract

Sustainable livestock management is crucial for nomadic herders in Ethiopia's highlands, where climate variability and environmental pressures exacerbate challenges to traditional practices. A qualitative research design was employed, involving semi-structured interviews with 30 herders from diverse regions in the highlands. Data were analysed using thematic content analysis. Herders reported significant reliance on traditional practices such as rotational grazing and drought-resistant breeds, though they also acknowledged the need for innovative solutions like improved water harvesting systems to mitigate climate-related risks. The findings underscore the importance of integrating both traditional knowledge and modern technologies in sustainable livestock management strategies among herder communities. Policy makers should consider supporting initiatives that promote community-led innovation while preserving indigenous practices, such as facilitating access to drought-resistant breeds and water harvesting solutions.

Keywords: *Ethiopia, Highlands, Nomadic, Pastoralism, Sustainability, Livestock, Anthropology*

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