

A Behavioural Study of the Sheep and Goats of the Transhumant Gaddis

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ABSTRACT The mobile herds of sheep and goats were the focus of study to compare the general behavioural patterns and the maternal behaviors. The study area was Bharmour, located in District Chamba of Himachal Pradesh in the north-west Himalayas. To compare the behaviour of sheep and goats techniques of naturalistic observation, using ethograms of *macro-* and *micro- units of behaviour* were used. Student's *t*-test was used to compare the sheep and goats on these units of behaviour. It was found that the two species differed on all macro-units of general behaviour patterns except one. The sheep and goats differed on 10 micro-units of maternal behaviour, but there was no difference on two behaviours. The goats grazed on the hind legs but the sheep grazed head down. The goats had lower score on moving in contact/proximity than the sheep, along with that the goats moved and rested alone to a greater degree than the sheep. The suckling was the most common behaviour in mother-infant interaction. Goat mothers were more udder rejecting than the sheep. While goats emitted greater number of low pitched bleats than the sheep; the sheep on the other hand, emitted greater number of high pitched bleats. In addition sheep exhibited greater amount of tongue manipulation of the palate and smelling than the goats.