

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background Information

Poultry farming is the practice of raising domesticated birds such as chicken, turkey, duck, geese, pheasant, guinea fowl etc. as a subcategory of animal husbandry for the purpose of producing meat and egg for food and other by-products such as droppings, feathers as raw materials for industries. Poultry refers to domesticated birds that are reared majorly for meat and egg and sometimes, other by-products. In Agricultural resource management study (ARMS) formally known as farm cost and returns survey (FCRS) poultry include ostriches and other game birds but most operation raise only one specie of poultry for single purpose e.g. farmers keep laying hen to produce egg for human consumption or for breeding purpose. Some raise starter, pullets and others concentrate on raising chickens or turkey for meat production. (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1954).

The three most common species of poultry are domesticated fowl, duck and turkey; few breeds of chicken are Andalusian, Orpingtons which are made up of white, black and buff orpingtons, leghorns, Plymouth Rock etc. breeds of turkey include Norfolk turkey which is black with spotted white wing, Cambridge turkey, a bronze grey bird larger and leggier than the Norfolk. Breeds of duck; buff orpington duck, pelkin duck also known as the island duck, Australian spotted, American black etc. (Norris 2005). Since domestic fowl accounts for over 90% of the total number of poultry across the globe, more emphasis will be placed on domesticated fowl in the course of this study.

More than 50 billion chickens are reared annually all over the world as a source of food (poultry farming – wikiedia, 2011). This is attributed to the importance of poultry products in terms of its nutritional values such as quality protein, liquids, carbohydrate, multitude of vitamins, minerals, cholesterol and pigments (Izunobi, 2002). Research has shown that in Nigeria poultry as a source of meat supplies about 20% of the total meat needs of the nation. This is grossly inadequate when compared with that in developed countries like America where as at 1915, poultry enterprise was already existing in the yard of many homes of the rural and small town families (U. S. Department of Commerce).

Research has pointed out that in most part of Nigeria, poultry farms operate in a less equipped poultry houses under the care of less competent poultry farmers that are less concerned about the recent technologies that are relevant for the improvement of their poultry management and increasing the yield of their input. This is one of the major reasons why most developed countries in the world produce and consume higher poultry products than Nigeria. In the United States for instance, statistics has it that the estimate of egg consumption is 250 – 300 egg per head per annum, this is in contrast to Nigeria where the estimated egg consumption is 20-25 eggs per head per annum (Oluyemi and Robert, 2000). Therefore, there is urgent need for training poultry farmers in Nigeria as a whole and in Oshimili South Local government Area of delta State in particular in order to make up for this discrepancy.

Training in simple terms refers to the imparting of specific skills, ability and knowledge through appropriate educational methodology to improve performance and efficiency of the trainee. Training is any attempt to improve current or future employee performance by increasing an employee's ability to perform through learning, usually by changing the employee's attitude or increasing his or her skills and knowledge. Training needs depends on lack or deficiency in skills. The need for training and development is determined by employee's performance deficiency computed as follows

Training need = standard performance -- actual performance. (Human Resources Management, 2010).

Training is basically classified into lectures and on-the-job training. Lecture is the kind of training that takes place off-site i.e. in classrooms or lecture halls. It is used because of its low cost and its capacity to reach many people at a time. It is referred to as a one-way training device and it is sometimes criticized as a training device. On-the-job training takes place at the place of primary assignment. It is most time used as a supplement for the off-site training since it is usually impossible to teach someone everything she needs to know at a location off-site.

Since training is so crucial in developing individual's managerial ability, it may be referred to as the basis of economic development. Going by the quote by Thomas and portal, (1992) which says development is achieved through investing in human capital and raising the

productivity capacity of the society, also the economist school of thought who viewed development primarily in terms of a nation's relative prosperity, it is therefore of great need that the poultry farmers in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State and those in Nigeria as a whole be assessed to determine whether they need training in order to increase their competence for better management of their farms.

1.2 Statement of Problem

A number of challenges are associated with poultry production in Delta State and in Nigeria as a whole among which is disease incidence; for example Newcastle disease is a major constraint in the production of village chicken (Alexander, 1991 and Spradbrow, 1988). Many developing countries suffer high mortality in unprotected flocks based on the fact that circulating strands of Newcastle disease virus is capable of causing 100% mortality. According to (Eekeren et al, 1990), insufficiency of clean fresh water can seriously retard the growth of chicks, impair egg production and sometimes lead to the mortality of young chicks. Other challenges include poorly equipped poultry houses, wrong way of administering drugs, and poor management techniques which is most times as a result of incompetence of the poultry farmers.

Giving training in various aspects of poultry management on the recent discoveries, observations, developments and techniques will go a long way in solving some of these problems. This study is therefore designed to answer the following research questions

- What is the level of competence of poultry farmers in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State?
- What is the expected level of competence of poultry farmers?
- How do poultry farmers perceive their task?
- What are the task areas in which poultry farmers require further training in order to check persisting problems and boost productivity

1.3 Objectives of the study

The broad objective of this study is to examine the needs of training poultry farmers in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State. The specific objectives of the study are to

- a. describe the social-economic characteristics of poultry farmers
- b. identify the perceived level of competence of poultry farmers in accomplishing their tasks

- c. ascertain poultry farmers perceived importance of their task
- d. ascertain the task in which poultry farmers require further training.

1.4 Hypothesis of the Study

This hypothesis will be tested in this study

H_{o1} there is significant differences in gender perceived importance of various task performed by poultry farmers

1.5 Significance of the Study

The need for this study is to identify certain challenges of the poultry industries in Delta state, and to cause noticeable change in the poultry farming of this age by training poultry farmers on improved system of poultry management and exposing them to the importance attached to their various tasks and the tasks in which they need further training as a way of increasing productivity.

MANAGERIAL COMPETENCE AND TRAINING NEEDS OF POULTRY FARMERS IN NIGERIA

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