

PDF - ASSESSMENT OF COMMONLY IDENTIFIED DISEASES IN THE 2 COMMON POULTRY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS - researchcub.info

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The survival of rural poultry industry in developing countries depends to a large extent on the type of rearing methods employed and seasonal changes in weather conditions. In nearly all African countries, poultry production in rural areas is predominantly based on a free-range system utilizing indigenous types of fowl, (Kitalyi, 1998; Horst, 1988). The system is characterized with family ownership of the birds. Then birds are then left to scavenge to meet their nutritional needs. The feed resources vary depending on local conditions and the farming system. Housing may or may not be provided, (Huchzermeyer, 1973; Atunbi and Sonaiya, 1994; Kuit, Traore and Wilson, 1986). Where housing is provided, usually local materials are used for construction. Low productivity is the main feature of this production system, which can be attributed to low genetic potential, poor disease control programmes and poor feeding. Recently, the highly infectious Newcastle disease (NCD) is reported to have caused 100 percent mortality. And it has been identified as a major poultry production constraint in the village chicken production systems of many African Countries (Chabeuf, 1990; Olayiwole, 1984; Achiempong, 1992). Livestock husbandry activities are minimal with some roles played by gender. The health of the birds is not guaranteed because; there are little to no disease control programmes such as vaccination of the birds at various stages and ages. The birds are exposed to many disease conditions at various seasons of the year. In most cases indigenous knowledge are used to treat/handle the poultry (Ugwu, et al., 2009).

Disease like Newcastle and parasitic infection have been reported to be the most devastating and prevalent poultry disease in many developing countries especially in Africa, (Chabeuf, 1990; Chrysostome, 1995; Bell, Kane and Le Jan, 1995). Parasites are also prevalent due to favourable environmental conditions, (Zaria, et al. 1993). In spite of low-input by rural poultry farmers in developing countries on poultry production, free-range birds play many socio-economic roles. In Africa, they constituted over 50 percent of the total poultry population and contributed 30 to 80 percent of total national poultry products (Sonaiya, 1990). Estimates based on human and livestock population in Ethiopia showed that the village chicken provides 125kg of poultry meat per capital per year, whereas, cattle provides 5.23kg, (Forsiddo, 1986).

In Africa, mortality of indigenous chickens under free-range system was very high due to diseases, poor management, poor breeding system and malnutrition, (Dipleolu, Keripe, Gbadamosi, and Gbadamosi, 1998). Also, some diseases can appear more prevalent and devastating at certain seasons of the year. Newcastle disease and other respiratory diseases become more prevalent in the dry season while parasitic infections appear more during the rainy seasons.

1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The prevention and management of diseases outbreak and the systems of poultry management in Sierra Leone remains the major challenge to the maximization of profits and other benefits that could be realized from poultry.

1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Poor management system of poultry production and ineffective diseases prevention and control has been identified as a major constraint militating against the survivability of poultry enterprise in Sierra Leone in general and the rural set-up in particular. The poor management of the enterprise greatly favoured other

seasonally-dependent poultry diseases that constitute a major threat to poultry business and its profitability.

Thus, the objectives of the study were to:

- (a) Identify the common system of poultry in Sierra Leone
- (b) Identify the pattern of disease outbreak and possible causes in the systems of poultry management identified
- (c) To assess the consequences in the growth and production of chicken in these (free range and intensive) systems.
- (d) To identify and assess the methods of prevention and control of the diseases in the two systems identified.

1.4 JUSTIFICATION

The population of rural poultry in Africa has been estimated to account for more than 60 percent of the total national poultry population, (Sonaiya, 1990a). For example in Nigeria, rural poultry accounted for about eighty percent of the total national flock, (Awan, 1993). Despite the high percentage, the survivability of rural poultry industry in Nigeria is very low due to poor management techniques embarked upon by rural poultry farmers, and outbreak of seasonally dependent diseases that can account for high chick losses.

The management of village chicken is complicated by the presence of multi-aged groups in the same flock. High chick mortality can be attributed to poor feeding, house and health control practices. There was usually no preferential treatment for the chicks, as they compete for the available feed resource with other animals. Where supplementary feeding and water are provided, the containers used are too deep for the chicks to reach the contents. Predation can also be a major cause of high chick mortality because the young chicks are more vulnerable. Predators like hawks, rats, mongooses, snakes, dogs, cats and foxes prey on young chicks especially those in free-range management system.

This management system can lead to failure of health control programs due to poor administration of vaccine carriers whether food or water as the birds are unprotected. Feeding and health improvement programmes will only be successful if this situation is given due consideration to ensure that the different birds are protected. The mortality rate of naturally brooded chicks, whose only source of feed is from scavenging under free-range conditions, is very high and often exceeds 50 percent up to eight weeks of age. (Chabeuf, 1990; Olayiwole, 1984; Achiempong, 1992).

Therefore there is a need to adopt a better system of poultry management that reduces or prevents the loss of small chicks and the fowls to diseases and other environmental factors that are detrimental to the profitability of poultry management.

1.5 PURPOSE OF STUDY

It is hoped that this research work with many other relevant ones will not only inform but provide enough impetus to drive the needed change we need to see that will lead to increase profitability of poultry management in our country Sierra Leone.

1.6 ASSUMPTION OF THE STUDY

This study was based on the following assumptions:

That poultry management especially within the rural communities could be improved through the sensitization of the major actors to the outcomes of this research.

That diseases management in poultry could be improved upon by properly educating everyone involved about simple ways to prevent outbreak and by encouraging use of vaccines.

That through our contact with the farms, information could be shared and impacted by both parties for the mutual benefits of all.

1.7 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The major constraints encountered in the course of this research were: financial problems, bad road network leading to farms and the farmers in charge, transport cost, logistic cost and cost of consumables, cost of research materials were also high.

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