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Sociocultural and Prescription Characteristics of Animal Health Workers in Akwalbom State

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Abstract

The socio-cultural and drug prescription characteristics of Animal Health Workers in Akwalbom State were examined in 14 local government areas, with the aid of 50 structured questionnaires distributed to animal health practitioners of which (27) were returned. The results revealed that animal health practices were mostly seen in Uyo (44.4%) and Abak (33.3%) of which 70.37% were male and 29.62% were female. Among them, the 20-30years age groups were more (44.4%), with 70.37% having tertiary education and 29.62% having secondary education (veterinary 33.33%, animal health 27.77% and animal science 27.77%). The animal health workers stocked mostly antibiotics drugs (14.28%) followed by coccidial drugs (13.75%), vaccines (13.22%) and vitamin supplements (13.22%). The result also revealed that 66.66% of the animal health workers have been in existence for 1-10years, while 11- above 20years in existence were only 32.51% and that all the animal health workers prescribed drugs to farmers. Again, 67.74% of the animal health workers sourced drugs from pharmaceutical company agents with tylodox (10.41%) as the most commonly prescribed drug, while 40.74% had use human drugs to treat poultry and 85.18% favour the use of drugs both in water and feed. Also, 27(100%) had full knowledge of antibiotic resistance with 19.44% of the incidence being experienced with Chronic Respiratory Disease (CRD). The result also showed that abuse of antibiotic administration (12.00%) was the major cause of antibiotic resistance. Therefore, effective education and training on the dangers of wrong prescription and antibiotic resistance in poultry production in Nigeria should be provided to animal health practitioners.

Keywords:Animal health, chronic respiratory disease (CRD), vaccines, antibiotic resistance

Introduction

Livestock production provides a means of livelihood to millions of people in the tropics. The potential of livestock in sustaining local economics ranging from the village family to national corporate entities have been acknowledged worldwide (ITDG and IIRR, 1996; Etuk *et al.*, 2005). Poultry production has long been recognized as one of the quickest ways for a rapid increase in protein supply in the shortest run. Of recent, there has been a recorded improvement in poultry production sub-sector in Nigeria with its share of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increasing in absolute terms. Poultry eggs and meat contribution of the livestock share of the GDP increased from 26% in 1995 to 27% in 1999 (CBN, 1999; Adedeji *et al.*, 2014) and the relative ease of compounding efficient food using easily available local feedstuffs (Afolabi *et al.*, 2014).

Poultry management system in Nigeria is of three types which are intensive, extensive and semi-intensive. Poultry production systems are influenced by some factors which are; Types of poultry (Birds), Housing, Socio-economic background of the practitioner, Health and diseases, Feed sources and feeding, Sales and Disposal (Adedeji *et al.*, 2013). Intensive poultry farming provides the optimum conditions for the concentration of pathogens and transmission. The crowding of thousands of birds in an enclosed warm and dusty environment is highly conducive for the transmission of contagious disease (Collins, 2007; Chima 2011). Also, the peculiar climatic features of the tropics favour high incidence of infectious diseases in intensively farmed poultry and this has led to the liberal use of antimicrobial agents in poultry farms in most countries of the region (Pagot, 1992; Chah *et al.*, 2002). Thus, susceptible trends in bacterial agents of economic and public health importance, and the drug use habit need to be constantly monitored (Okoli *et al.*, 2004).

This study focused on the socio-cultural and drug prescription characteristics of animal health workers in Akwalbom State.

Materials and Methods

Primary data were collected with the aid of a structured questionnaire which were distributed to animal health workers in selected Local Government Area of Akwalbom State. 50 questionnaires were administered to animal health workers purposely due to ease of their accessibility and the level of understanding of the studied topic; of this 27 of the questionnaires were returned.

The analysis of the data collected from the survey was done using simple descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, percentage and mean.

Results and Discussion

The results in table 1 revealed that animal health practices were mostly seen in Uyo (44.4%) and Abak (33.3%) of which 70.37% were male and 29.62% were female. Among them, the 20-30 years age groups were more (44.4%), with 70.37% having tertiary education and 29.62% having secondary education (veterinary 33.33%, animal health 27.77% and animal science 27.77%).

Table 1: Socio-cultural characteristics of animal health workers and professional experience of the health practitioners

Parameter	frequency	Percentage
a. Location		
Abak	9	33.3
Uruan	3	11.1
Eket	2	7.4
Ibesikpo	1	3.7
Uyo	12	44.4
b. Gender distribution		
Male	19	70.37
Female	8	29.62
c. Age distribution		
20-30	12	44.4
31-30	8	29.62
41-50	7	25.92
51-60	-	-
Above 60	-	-
d. Educational qualification		
Nil	-	-
Primary	-	-
Secondary	8	29.62
Tertiary	19	70.37
e. Tertiary education		
Agriculture	1	5.5
Animal science	5	27.77
Animal health	5	27.77
Veterinary	6	33.33
Others -		
Civil Eng/Dep. An. Sc.	1	5.55
Total	18	100
a. professional career of animal health practitioners		
Full time	16	69.56
Intermittent	1	4.34
Part time	6	26.08
Total	23	100
b. years of experience		
1-5	10	38.46
6-10	6	23.07
11-15	5	19.23
16-20	2	7.69
Above 20	3	11.53
Total	26	100

The animal health practitioners stocked mostly antibiotics drugs (14.28%) followed by coccidial drugs (13.75%), vaccines (13.22%) and vitamin supplements (13.22%). They stated that abuse of antibiotic

administration (14.01%) was the major cause of antibiotic resistance. Again, 67.74% of the practitioners sourced drugs from pharmaceutical company agents with tylodox (10.41%) as the most commonly prescribed drug, while 40.74% had use human drugs to treat poultry and 85.18% favour the use of drugs both in water and feed. Also, 27(100%) had full knowledge of antibiotic resistance with 19.44% of the incidence being experienced with chronic respiratory diseases (CRD). The result also showed that abuse of antibiotic administration (12.00%) was the major cause of antibiotic resistance. Therefore, effective education and training on the dangers of antibiotic resistance in poultry production in Nigeria should be provided to both the poultry farmers and the animal health practitioners.

Table 2: Drug stocking and prescription characteristics

Parameter	Frequency	Percentage
a. Years of operation in the business		
1-5yrs	9	33.33
6-10yrs	9	33.33
11-15yrs	5	18.51
16-20yrs	-	-
Above 20	4	14.81
Total	27	100
b. Frequency of drug prescription to farmers		
Yes	26	100
No	-	-
Total	26	100
c. Types of drugs stock		
Antibiotics	27	14.28
Coccidial drugs	26	13.75
Viccines	25	13.22
Feed additives	23	12.16
Vitamin supplements	25	13.22
Growth promoter	24	12.69
Mycotoxin binders	7	3.70
Egg promoter/formulars	20	10.58
Yolk colourants	6	3.17
Acaricides	6	3.17
Others	-	-
Total	189	100
d. source of drugs		
Pharmaceutical company agents	21	67.74
Importers	6	19.35
Traders	4	12.90
Total	31	100

Conclusion

It was conclude that more animal health practices were located in Uyo (44.4%) and Abak (33.3%). Also animal health workers were mostly males 19(70.39%) and had high knowledge of antibiotic resistance (100%). The result also revealed that health workers also stock, prescribe and sell more antibiotics to farmers. Therefore, there is need for effective education and training on drug prescription and dangers of veterinary drug misuse so as to reduce antibiotic resistance.

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