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Different constraints in adopting ethno veterinary practices in native chicken rearing

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Abstract

A well-structured questionnaire was provided to 100 farmers to collect data during training classes organized by Veterinary University Training and Research Centre, Tirupur on the importance of ethno veterinary practices in desi bird rearing to analyse the constraints in adopting ethno veterinary practices in desi bird rearing. The study revealed lack of awareness, unavailability of readymade herbal preparations, lack of seasonal herbs, unavailability of time, labour involvement, duration of treatment, easily available allopathic medicines, lack of traditional remedies for emerging diseases, lack of documentation, lack of transfer of knowledge within the family and to the community as the major constraints faced by the farmers.

Keywords: Desi birds, Ethno veterinary practices, Constraints

Introduction

Rural poultry farming involves rearing of desi birds under free range, semi intensive or intensive conditions (Buragohain *et al.*, 2007) ^[3]. In rural villages of India, chicken reared in backyard are mostly desi type with low egg and meat production (Ghosh *et al.*, 2005) ^[4]. The health care management of desi chickens is most important which are prone to Newcastle (Ranikhet) disease. Lack of proper health management and lack of timely approach in getting veterinary aid incurs a heavy economic loss to the farmers owing to the disease outbreak. Thus to overcome this challenge, ethno-veterinary practices can be used as an alternative and sustainable solution in desi bird rearing. Indigenous technical knowledge is the treasure of knowledge found in rural India which the people in a given community have developed over time (Rakesh *et al.*, 2015) ^[5]. This study was conducted to identify the constraints faced by the farmers and to suggest suitable recommendations to make this enterprise more profitable and sustainable.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in 100 desi bird farmers who attended training programme on importance of ethno veterinary practice in desi bird rearing. Data was collected by a well-structured questionnaire from individual farmers. Garrett's ranking technique was used to give ranking for the constraints. Garrett's formula for converting ranks into

percent is as follows:

$$\text{Percent position} = \frac{100(R_{ij} - 0.5)}{N_i}$$

R_{ij} = Rank given for i^{th} factor by the j^{th} individual;
 N = Number of factors ranked by the j^{th} individual

The percent position of each rank was converted into scores referring to the table of Garret. For each factors, the scores of individual respondents were added together and divided by the total number of the respondents for whom scores were added. These mean scores for all the factors were arranged in the descending and the most influencing constraint faced by the farmers were identified through the ranks assigned.

Results and Discussion

The study (Table I) revealed the socio economic profile of the farmers. The majority of the respondents were of the middle aged small farmers who wish to start this enterprise as a new one to concentrate on herbal enriched poultry production. Other farmers who intend to enrich their knowledge in ethno veterinary practices produce chicks with the parent stock at their own risk. The system of rearing as followed by most of

Table 1: Socio economic profile of the farmers

S. No	Variables	Category	Percentage
1	Age	Young	34
		Middle	47
		Old	19
2	Sex	Male	88
		Female	12
3	Education	School dropouts	29
		Degree holders	71
4	Occupation	Desi bird rearing as single enterprise	44
		Integrated farming along with agriculture and animal husbandry	56
5	Land holdings of farmers	Upto 2.5 acres	42
		2.5 acres to 5 acres	36
		More than 5 acres	22
6	Desi bird rearing experience	New entrepreneur	39
		6 months to one year	33
		One year and above	28
7	Source of birds	Own breeding	64
		Chick purchase	36
8	System of rearing	Free range	26
		Semi intensive	33
		intensive	41
9	Flock size	Upto 50 birds	44
		50-100 birds	37
		Above 100 birds	19
10	Purpose of rearing	For egg	7
		Meat	85
		Both	8
11	Marketing age	At 1 kg weight	27
		1-2 kg weight	73
12	Marketing source	Local Shandy	24
		Retail sales	72
		Hotels	4
13	Vaccination to birds	Ranikhet disease	62
		Fowl pox	0
		Both	12
		No vaccination	26
14	Treatment to diseases	Allopathic medicines with Veterinarian's assistance	86
		First aid herbal remedy	14
15	Source of awareness on Ethno Veterinary practices	Ancestors	7
		Friends	2
		Veterinary doctors	9
		Extension officials	35
		Trainings	2
		News paper	29
		Radio	9
		Television	5
		Journals/Magazine	2
		Any other source	2

Table 2: Constraints faced by Desi bird farmers in adopting ethno veterinary practices

S. No	Constraints	Mean score	Rank
1	Lack of awareness	63.82	I
2	Unavailability of readymade herbal preparations	57.80	II
3	Lack of raw materials/herbal plants especially seasonal herbs	54.04	III
4	Unavailability of time/preparation of recipe is time consuming	52.98	IV
5	Labour involvement	43.62	V
6	Duration of treatment/slow effect of herbal medicines	40.10	VI
7	Easily available allopathic medicines	35.02	VII
8	Lack of traditional remedies for newly emerging diseases	28.92	VIII
9	Lack of documentation of the traditional system/Lack of legal recognition to this practice	22.19	IX
10	Lack of transfer of knowledge within the family and to the community by the local healers	12.20	X

The farmers was of the intensive type and it is maintained mainly for meat purpose sold at the age of 1.5-2.5kg body weight in market. Majority of the farmers also reported of

following vaccination for Ranikhet disease and their dependence on allopathic medicine for health management. They wish to adopt ethno veterinary practices in desi bird

rearing, the awareness for which they are getting through trainings adopted by Institutes.

The advantage of using Garrett's technique over simple frequency distribution is that the constraints are arranged based on the point of view from the respondents (Table II). The first constraint faced by all farmers irrespective of their socio economic profile was lack of awareness about the application of ethno veterinary practices in poultry health. Followed by it, the unavailability of readymade herbal preparation and poor source of herbs was reported. Freshly prepared herbal preparation has good effect than the ready made preparations because certain phytochemical constituents become volatile when prepared and stored for a long time. Due to increasing deforestation, many plant species of medicinal value is in the verge of extinction. The next constraint faced was the time involvement, followed by labour involvement, duration and easily available allopathic drugs. As compared to the past, the farmers are now economically stable and they are dependent on these easily available allopathic drugs to overcome their time and labour as the herbs are made in the form of paste or extract and a course of 5-7 fresh preparation has to be made by collecting the different herbs indicated for the treatment.

Many new variants of bacteria are emerging leading to new outbreak of diseases which were found to be beyond control with the herbal drugs. Thus it becomes less reliable. Lack of documentation of this traditional system of medicine is yet another constraint which the younger generation farmers were reporting. There was also no legal recognition to this practice reported. This was due to the lack of transfer of knowledge from the local healers to their community owing to superstitious belief. On the other hand, it seems that the young generation seems indifferent towards this knowledge. Majority of the elders were of the opinion that their children or their community influenced by modern technologies were not interested to know this wisdom which was the main root cause for the erosion of this precious traditional knowledge from us. Thus our findings by and large reflects the work carried out by Adedeji *et al.*, (2013)^[1], Rakesh *et al.*, (loc. cit), and derives support from their results.

Hence to encourage farmers to depend on veterinary practices, they need to be trained about its prophylactic importance in poultry health. In addition, measures have to be taken to document the practices, validate it and to improve, cultivate and preserve the nearly extinct variety of herbs. Primary school education has to focus on the application of ethno veterinary medicine and the need to preserve the treasure of medicinal herbs lying in this peninsular country. Also the traditional practices has to be integrated with the modern practices and improved upon to apply it successfully at the field level. (Ahmed S. El wakeel and Abuelgasin, 1996)^[2].

Summary

It was concluded from this study that the farmers face several constraints in adopting traditional ethno veterinary practices in desi bird rearing and gives more importance to get knowledge about the practices to adopt it as a prophylactic and therapeutic remedy to improve the health condition of the birds.

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