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EDITORIAL

The West African Journal of Physical and Health Education (WAJOPHE) is an interdisciplinary journal that publishes articles, research findings and position papers in physical and health education, recreation, sports and dance. The journal was initially the innovation or brainchild of the Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. Today, it serves as a forum where scholars in education, exercise, sports, recreation, dance, and other health professionals contribute towards the full development of man and his environment, especially with regard to the entire West African subregion.

Among the articles in *Volume 12* are: perception of road safety education as a panacea to common incidence and consequences of accident among commercial motorcyclists; school health variables as determinants of health delivery programme; personality and leadership styles as determinant of organizational commitment; an analysis of teaching and learning methods of the physically challenged children through physical education programme; factors influencing intramural sports programmes among secondary schools; impact of health education on prevention and control of avian influenza outbreak; eradicating examination malpractice in public secondary schools; influence of peer pressure and unstable home on adolescents' consumption of hard drugs; gender, age and occupational stress; occupational health and safety as predictors of employee productivity in the manufacturing sector; evaluation of healthful school environment in nomadic primary schools; benefits of recreational activities to physically challenged children; impact of teacher education on wealth creation and employment; and so on.

I want to specially thank all the contributors, for making the publication of this volume possible and worthwhile. I also want to thank the efforts of Professor J.A. Ajala and those of the current head of the Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education, University of Ibadan towards the publication of this and previous volumes.

B.O. Ogundele
Managing Editor

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Impact of Health Education on Prevention and Control of Avian Influenza Outbreak among People of Ilorin Metropolis

Babadare A. and Ibraheem T.O.*

Abstract

This study examined the impact of health education on prevention and control of Avian Influenza outbreak in Ilorin metropolis. Three hundred poultry farmers from the three local government areas of the metropolis constituted the sample. A structured questionnaire that had been scrutinized by experts in the field was used for the study. The instrument was found reliable at 0.80r coefficient of correlation with a test-retest method. Descriptive research survey was adopted for the study. Three research hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Data collected were analysed by the use of chi-square statistics. The result of the study showed that available health information exerts much impact on prevention and control of Avian Influenza infection. The result also revealed that the level of health awareness of poultry farmers have impact on prevention and control of Avian Influenza infection. It was therefore recommended that government should endeavour to sensitise the members of the community in general and poultry farmers in particular on the risks and complications associated with Avian Influenza infection; and that poultry farmers should ensure regular and prompt sanitation to prevent breeding of the viruses causing the disease as well as preventing its spread.

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Introduction

The outbreak of Avian influenza, otherwise known as bird flu, has been, at various times, considered endemic, epidemic and pandemic all over the world. Avian influenza is no longer a disease of birds alone, since there have been different reports of human cases throughout the world. Peter (2007) stated that the flu was first described in birds in Italy in 1878 and that it was initially considered a disease of birds only till 1997, when the first human case was recorded in Hong Kong. World Health Organisation (2007) noted that the human form of the disease has been documented in twelve countries of the world, with 329 cases causing 201 deaths between 2003 and 2007.

Avian influenza is a deadly and highly infectious viral disease caused by a group of viruses known as H5NI. The World Health Organization (2007) defined bird flu as a contagious viral disease of birds, which has been recently discovered to affect man. It stated that the viruses causing the disease are found in the family of *orthomyxoviridae* which are classified into types A, B and C and that the flu viruses belong to type A.

Avian influenza occurs in different forms and exerts different effects on its hosts. The disease presents in human being in mild and severe forms. The mild forms are known as low pathogenic avian influenza (LPAI) while the severe form is tagged highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). Peter (2007) observed that there are two forms of avian influenza which are HPAI, responsible for severe outbreaks and capable of transmission to humans, with high case fatality rates; and LPAI, which are mild in nature and may go unnoticed, unless regular testing for the viruses is carried out.

Health education has been variously defined. Abubakar (2007) defined it as education for healthful living; the kind of knowledge acquired to live a healthy life. It is a way of assisting people to adopt positive health behaviour through their own efforts, so as to prevent diseases, promote health and improve standard of living. Nayar, Kelly and Lewis (1997) noted that health education is a method of conveying to the community the knowledge that is necessary for the prevention of diseases and the opportunity to lead a full normal life physically, mentally and socially.

Health education plays a unique role in the prevention and control of diseases as well as promotion of health and wellbeing of people. Due to the importance of health education, it is adopted as the first component of primary healthcare by the constitution of World Health Organisation. John (1998) stated that health education leads to behavioural changes that are conducive to health. According to him, it ensures the prevention of diseases in human population.

Health education exerts much impact on the prevention and control of diseases through sensitization and creation of awareness among people within the community. Moronkola (1999) noted in his examination of health education that it teaches people how to take care of their personal and community health. He stressed further that health education makes people see the need for preventing diseases rather than spending more time and money for treatment. Adeniyi (1993) and Samuel (2007) asserted that the main purpose of health education is to impart knowledge regardless of whether proper habits and attitudes are immediately formed.

Poultry rearing has been a common and agelong practice among people of Ilorin metropolis. There are different poultry rearing practices in operation today in Nigeria. The most common among them is the 'backyard poultry system'. This rearing system makes those practising it the most vulnerable to bird flu, going by their regular contact with chickens — the chief host of causative viruses. Afolayan (2008) observed that most poultry farms in Nigeria (about 60-70%) are backyard farms, operating behind the residential building of farmers. This process poses huge challenges to people, with regard to protecting oneself against the disease as well as preventing its spread. Collaboration between health practitioners and those in the media can prevent the spread of diseases and reduce reoccurrences in human population (WHO, 1997).

Poultry rearing practices are common among people of southwestern and northern parts of Nigeria, both on a small and large-scale. The World Health Organisation (2006) noted that Nigeria has an estimated poultry population of 140 million birds, largely concentrated in the southwestern part of the country. It stated further that as is the case in several affected parts of southeast Asia,

around 60% of Nigeria's poultry production takes place in small backyard flocks. Large-scale commercial firms of poultry are run mainly in northern states, where avian influenza outbreak has been confirmed.

The infection with avian influenza virus has posed a serious threat to the health and wellbeing of people all over the world. The World Health Organisation's Joint Committee on the Control of Avian Influenza (2008) stated that the crisis is currently one of the most important public health issues of our time, with tremendous implications for people's livelihood and socioeconomic profiles.

The spate of human infection with avian influenza in Nigeria has reached an alarming stage and calls for urgent attention to control its spread. People need to be sensitized on how to avoid infection by bird flu. Afolayan (2008) posited that media enlightenment programmes on how to eradicate avian influenza will help improve public awareness about the risks associated with the disease and reduce its occurrence. All media enlightenment programmes on health and health-related issues through radio and television can help prevent and reduce the spread of infection within a community (UNICEF, 2004).

Avian influenza afflicts people that have close contact with unhygienic poultry within their vicinity. Afolayan (2008) stated that avian influenza infection can be reduced by the promotion of improved hygiene and sanitation practices, particularly hand washing, among the general population. Afolayan added that people need to maintain good hygiene to prevent risks associated with avian influenza infection. Deji (2006) noted that public awareness on the risks associated with the infection and how they can be prevented is generally low. He maintained that public awareness campaigns should be mounted to inform, educate and motivate the Nigerian population about the menace of the disease and the preventive measures against it.

The prevention and control of this disease is being given urgent attention since its first outbreak in Nigeria. Olatunji and Kayode (2008) stated that the federal government has set up the national emergency preparedness and response plan as the basis for strategic containment action to fight bird flu in the areas of surveillance.

quarantine, depopulation, decontamination, relief, bio-security at farm sites, capacity-building, public enlightenment and social mobilization. Afolayan (2007) stressed that the technical committee set up by the Kwara State Government carried out active surveillance of about two hundred and ninety-eight established poultry farms in the state. He added that the committee took time to mobilize and sensitise the heads of departments in sixteen local government areas of the state, the media (electronic and print), poultry farmers and other stakeholders on prevention and control of avian influenza.

Avian influenza outbreak often spreads fast within areas of inhibition, affecting people in different spheres of life. Oladipo (2008) asserted that avian influenza infections can be prevented by avoiding contact with chickens, ducks or other birds, including their feathers, faeces and other waste in areas where the disease is known to exist. Where you cannot avoid contact with poultry birds, wash your hands with soap and clean water after any contact. Oladipo stated further that people should not sleep near poultry and should be careful about how they transport live or dead chickens, ducks or other birds from one place to another, even if they think the birds are healthy. Mohammed (2008) maintained that avian influenza infection can be prevented by quarantine and rapid surveillance to determine the extent of spread and disinfect birds in market and poultry farms to kill causative viruses. Jan and Denis (1994) stated that the promotion and maintenance of health involve keeping the environment clean, providing potable water, observing personal hygiene, having adequate food supply and maintaining proper storage facilities.

Research Questions

1. Does available health information on poultry rearing practice have significant impact on prevention and control of avian influenza in Ilorin metropolis?
2. Is there any significant impact of health awareness of poultry farmers on prevention of avian influenza in Ilorin metropolis?
3. Is there any significant impact of adequate sanitation on prevention and control of Avian Influenza in Ilorin metropolis?

Research Hypotheses

1. There will be no significant impact of available health information on poultry practices on prevention and control of Avian Influenza among people in Ilorin metropolis.
2. There will be no significant impact of health awareness of poultry farmers on prevention and control of Avian Influenza in Ilorin metropolis.
3. There will be no significant impact of adequate sanitation on prevention and control of avian influenza outbreak among people in Ilorin metropolis.

Methodology

The study was carried out with the use of descriptive survey method. The population for the study comprised all poultry farmers within the three local government areas in Ilorin metropolis. Stratified random sampling technique was employed to select three hundred respondents used for the study. The instrument used for gathering information for this study was structured questionnaire, thoroughly scrutinized by experts on the field. A reliability coefficient of correlation of 0.80r was obtained using test-retest method. The data collected were analysed with the used of chi-square statistical method of analysis. The result of analysis and interpretation are tabulated .

Ho 1: There will no significant impact of health education on prevention and control of Avian Influenza in Ilorin metropolis.

The result of analysis of tested hypothesis 1 shows the calculated chi-square (χ^2) of 21.23 against the critical table value of 12.59 at 0.05 alpha level of significance with degree of freedom of 6. Since the calculated value is greater than the critical value, the stated hypothesis is hereby rejected. This means that available health information have impact on prevention and control of avian influenza.

Table 1: Impact of health education on prevention & control of avian influenza

Variable	No	Df	Cal. X^2 value	Crit. value	Decision
The health education given to the poultry farmers on ideal rearing practices help to prevent Avian Influenza infection.	300	6	21.23	12.59	Hypothesis rejected
The information contained in the flair, magazines, newspapers and other print media help to sensitise the farmers and public about Avian Influenza infection.					
Available information on menace of Avian Influenza to humans and chickens by friends and families help to prevent spread of the disease.					

Ho 2: There will be no significant impact of health awareness of poultry farmers on prevention and control of avian influenza in Ilorin metropolis.

Table 2: Impact of health awareness on prevention & control of avian influenza

Variable	No	Df	Cal. X value	Crit. value	Decision
Engagement of mass media as an active partners in the public enlightenment campaign on Avian Influenza has helped to prevent the disease	300	6	32.74	12.59	Hypothesis rejected
Regular workshop and other media prog. organized for poultry farmers helps prevent and control avian influenza infection					
The regular monitoring of poultry firms by the special task force set up by the government helps to prevent and control Avian Influenza infection					

The result of tested hypothesis 2 showed the calculated value of 32.74 against the critical value of 12.59 at 0.05 alpha level of significance with degree of freedom of 6 (table 2). Since the calculated value is greater than the critical table value, the stated hypothesis is rejected. This means that health awareness of poultry farmers have much impact on prevention and control of avian influenza in Ilorin metropolis.

Hypothesis 3: There will be no significant impact of adequate sanitation on prevention and control of avian influence outbreak among people in Ilorin metropolis.

Table 3: Impact of adequate sanitation on prevention and control of Avian Influenza.

Variable	No.	Df	Cal. X^2 value	Crit. value	Decis.
Thorough washing of hands after touching birds and other poultry products help to prevent Avian Influenza infection	300	6	14.55	12.59	Rejected
Adequate sanitation of poultry farm prevent spread of Avian Influenza infection					
Thorough cooking of chickens and other poultry products helps to prevent Avian Influenza infection					

The findings from the analysis show the calculated value of 14.55 against the critical value of 12.59 at 0.05 alpha level of significance with degree of freedom of 6 (table 3). Since the calculated value is greater than the critical table value, the stated hypothesis is rejected. This means that adequate sanitation of poultry farms have great impact on prevention and control of avian influenza infection.

Discussion of Findings

The results of the analysis on hypothesis 1 revealed that available health information on poultry practices have impact on the prevention and control of avian influenza infection. This finding is

in line with Afolayan (2008), who maintained that media enlightenment programmes on eradication of avian influenza will help improve public awareness about risks associated with the disease and reduce its occurrence. John (1998) also corroborated the finding that health education lead to behavioural changes that are conducive to healthful living; and that it prevents diseases afflicting human population. UNICEF (2004) corroborated the finding that all media enlightenment programmes on health and health-related issues through radio and television help prevent and reduce the spread of infection within a community.

The result of the analysis on hypothesis 2 revealed that the level of health awareness of poultry farmers have great impact on the prevention and control of avian influenza. This finding confirmed Moronkola's (1999) assertion that health education teaches people how to take care of their personal and community health. Moronkola maintained that health education enables one to see the need to prevent diseases rather than spend time and money on treatment. Deji (2006) also supported the finding, but stated that public awareness on risks associated with avian influenza infection and how they can be prevented is generally low.

The finding from analysis on hypothesis 3 revealed that adequate sanitation by poultry farmers has significant impact on the prevention and control of avian influenza. This finding confirmed Afolayan's (2008) position that avian influenza infection can be reduced by the promotion of improved hygiene and sanitation practices, such as hand-washing among the general population. Oladipo (2008) also corroborated this position by saying that the disease can be prevented by avoiding contact with chickens, ducks or other wastes in areas where the disease is known to exist.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings, the research is concluded as follows:

1. Availability of health information has impact on the prevention and control of avian influenza.
2. The level of health awareness of poultry farmers has great impact on the prevention and control of avian influenza infection.

3. Adequate sanitation by poultry farmers has significant impact on the prevention and control of avian influenza infection.

Therefore, the research has the following recommendations as a way forward:

1. Government should endeavour to sensitise members of the community in general and poultry farmers in particular on the risks and complications associated with avian influenza.
2. Poultry farmers or poultry rearers should endeavour to attend workshops, seminars and other enlightenment programmes organized by government and non-government organizations.
3. Poultry farmers should ensure regular and prompt sanitation to prevent breeding of the viruses causing the disease as well as preventing its spread.
4. Poultry farmers or anybody that comes in contact with chickens or birds should wash his hands immediately.
5. Poultry farms should be located away from residential areas to avoid the spread of the disease.
6. Government should organize mass vaccination for chickens, birds, and other poultry animals.
7. People should endeavour to wash and cook chickens thoroughly before eating.

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