

Adoption Behaviour of Poultry Farmers

R. SUBRAMANIAN¹, K. RADHAKRISHNA MENON² and E.V. KALAMEGAM²

Poultry farming was started mainly to get additional income by a large number of farmers (84 per cent) and only eight per cent took up poultry for self-employment. The average time lag for the adoption of poultry farming was found to be 2-3 years. Out of the seven improved practices, three practices viz., maintenance of improved strain, feeding with balanced feed or prophylactic vaccination were found adopted by all the farmers studied. The adoption of other practices was found to vary between 52 to 92 per cent. With regard to the extent of adoption of these practices, 42 per cent adopted all the 7 practices, 22 per cent adopted six practices and 16 per cent each adopted five and four practices. So majority of the poultry farmers is adopting six practices and above. Lack of knowledge about the practices was the main reason for nonadoption of practices like debeaking, culling and control of endo and ecto-parasites.

The success of poultry development depends upon the basic principles of breeding, feeding, management and disease control. The State Department of Animal Husbandry has identified seven important practices, for the improvement in poultry production to a larger degree. Hence it is felt necessary to know to what extent the poultry farmers have adopted the improved practices besides the circumstances under which the people have taken to poultry farming. With this in view a study was undertaken with the objectives, viz; 1) To identify the factors that influenced the people to take to poultry farming, 2) to study the extent of adoption of certain selected practices by poultry farmers and 3) to find out the reasons for non-adoption of improved practices.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Erode and Modakurichi blocks of Coimbatore district because there are large number of commercial poultry farms in these blocks and poultry development programmes were in operation for five years in the area. As there were only fifty farms in these two blocks all the fifty were taken for the study. The seven improved practices recommended by the State Department of Animal Husbandry to achieve poultry development were considered for studying the extent of adoption of scientific poultry farming by the selected farmers. These recommended practices considered were (1) maintenance of improved strain, (2) feeding of poultry with balanced feed;

1 - 3 : Department of Agricultural Extension, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore - 3.

(3) prophylactic vaccination of birds; (4) debeaking of birds; (5) culling of birds; (6) control of endoparasites and (7) control of ecto-parasites. The data were collected through a pre-tested interview schedule and from the records kept with the farmers and in the blocks, and subjected to statistical analysis and discussed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The reasons given by the selected respondents for starting poultry farm are given in Table I.

TABLE I. Reasons for starting poultry farm

Reasons	No. of respondents studied	Percentage	Rank
Poultry farming provides additional income	42	84	I
Poultry gives organic manure	30	60	II
Women folk in the house had more leisure and so they can utilise the same well by having poultry	26	52	III
Poultry rearing is taken up as a mixed farming	8	16	IV
Extension workers advised to have poultry	7	14	V
Poultry rearing provides self employment	4	8	VI

From the above table it can be seen that poultry farming was taken up by majority of the farmers to get additional income, to increase the availability of organic manures (Sachdev 1975) and to provide some work to women folk during their leisure times. Singh (1972) reported that 87 per cent of the

total sample of farmers practiced poultry farming as a primary occupation.

II. Extent of adoption of improved practices: The extent of adoption of the selected improved practices by the respondents is furnished in Tables II and III.

TABLE II. Adoption of Individual Practices

Practice	Respondents adopting	
	No.	%
Maintenance of Improved Strain	50	100
Feeding of birds with balanced feed	50	100
Prophylactic vaccination	50	100
Debeaking of birds	33	66
Culling of birds	33	66
Control of endoparasites	46	92
Control of ectoparasites	26	52

The practices of maintaining improved strain, feeding with balanced feed and giving prophylactic vaccination were found to be adopted by all the respondents. Because of the steps taken by the government and private commercial agencies to popularise the improved strains among the poultry farmers and by the pressure exerted by the credit agencies on those who approaches for credit to go in for improved strains for starting poultry farms, all the poultry farmers in the area could have maintained only improved strains. There are many commercial agencies manufacturing ready made poultry feed and these are marketed by different agencies in the area. So the required feeds are available to the farmers in their own or very near to their places. Chicks of the improved strains were

protected against some important diseases before they are sold to farmers. The cent per cent adoption of these 3 practices can be attributed to the above facts. The next practice adopted by almost all the farmers (92 per cent) was the control of endoparasites. Debeaking and culling the birds were adopted only by one third of the respondent while control of ectoparasites was adopted only by just above 50 per cent of the respondents (52 per cent). Thus, there is variation in the adoption of these selected practices among the poultry farmers.

With a view to know how many farmers had adopted all the seven practices, six, five, four and so on practices, the data were analysed and the results are given in Table III.

TABLE III. Extent or adoption of recommended practices

Particulars	Adoption quotient	Respondents	
		No.	%
All the seven practices	100	21	42
Six practices	85.71	11	22
Five practices	71.43	8	16
Four practices	57.14	8	16
Three practices	42.85	2	4
Two practices	28.57	—	—
Only one practice	14.28	—	—
No practices	0.00	—	—

It is seen that 42 per cent of the respondents had adopted all the seven practices, 22 per cent six practices and so on. However, nine of the respondents adopted less than 3 practices. Thus, majority of the respondents (64 per cent) had adopted six practices and

above out of the seven practices studied. Khan (1973) reported that 97.50 per cent of poultry farmers adopted prophylactic vaccination, 93.12 per cent adopted balanced feeding and 87.29 per cent adopted the practice of debeaking. As far as the extent of adoption of individual practices and the total number of improved practices is concerned, the respondents of this study can be termed as high adopters.

III. Time lag for the adoption of intensive system of poultry rearing: With a view to study the time lag between the time of awareness of the intensive system of poultry rearing and its adoption by the farmers data were gathered and the analysis is presented in Table IV.

TABLE IV. Time lag for the adoption of intensive system of poultry rearing

Adoption period in years	Number of respondents	Percentage
Below 1 year	10	20
1—2	22	44
3—4	10	20
5—6	6	12
7—8	2	4
Total	50	100

The data reveal that out of 50 farmers contacted 44 per cent took one to two years to adopt the intensive system of poultry rearing rejecting the system of back yard poultry. Twenty per cent of them took less than one year to adopt this system. So the time lag for the adoption of this system among the majority of the farmers was only 2 years. The average time lag was found to be 2.3 years.

IV. Reasons for non-adoption of improved practices : Out of seven selected practices, three practices were found to be adopted by all the farmers. So the reasons for the non-adoption of four improved practices were collected from the respondents and are presented in Tables V to VIII.

TABLE V. Reasons for not adopting Debeaking of birds

Reasons	Respondents started No.	Percentage
No pecking problem	6	29
Do not know correct age for debeaking	5	24
Non-availability of debeaker	4	19
Non-availability of timely technical help	3	14
Not aware of the practice	3	14

Out of 50 respondents, 21 farmers did not adopt the debeaking. Of these 21 and 20 per cent had stated that they

TABLE VI. Reasons for not adopting culling of birds

Reasons	Respondents No.	Stated Percentage
Not aware of the practice	6	27
No separate space for rearing the culled birds	5	23
Only have a small farm	4	18
No time available	3	14
Non-availability of technical help	2	9
Culled birds picked up again, hence not adopted	1	4.5
Do not want to sell the birds	1	4.5

did not adopt this practice because there was no pecking problem in their flock. This shows that they are not aware of the fact that debeaking is to be done not only to prevent cannibalism but also to check feed wastage and selective feeding. Thus, the reasons attributed by the farmers show their lack of knowledge about the importance and method of debeaking the birds.

Thirty four of the respondents were found not adopting the practices of culling their birds. From the reasons given in Table VII, it is seen that majority of the farmers did not adopt the practice because they were not aware of this practice. The other reasons were more pertaining to their situational conditions.

TABLE VII. Reasons for not adopting control of endoparasites.

Reasons	Respondents No.	Stated Percentage
Not aware of the practice	2	50
All the birds are chicks, hence not dewormed	2	50

Only eight per cent of the respondents did not adopt this practice, because they were not aware of this practice (50 per cent) and their birds were only chicks (50 per cent). So lack of knowledge about this practice was the reason for the non-adoption of this practice also.

TABLE VIII. Reasons for non-adoption of the control of ectoparasites

Reasons	Respondents No.	Stated Percentage
No incidence of lice	20	84
Do not know how to delouse	2	8
No time	2	8

Out of 50 respondents 24 did not follow this practice. This was mainly due to 'No incidence of lice' in the flock (84 per cent). This shows that the birds were kept under good sanitary conditions.

Thus, from the reasons given by the respondents, it can be seen that the important reason for the non-adoption of the 4 practices was their ignorance of the importance and method of following the practices.

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