Study of Microbial Contamination in Broilers and Drug Sensitivity in Modern Abattoirs in Khartoum State, Sudan

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Abstract

This study was planned to investigate presence of bacterial contamination of broilers breast, back, leg and neck during slaughter process. A total of 154 swab samples were taken after hanging in slaughter area, after bleeding, after scalding, after defeathering, after evisceration, after washing, after chilling, from slaughtering knives, scalding water, packing machine and hands of the workers. Total viable counts (TVCs) and isolation and identification of bacteria were used. All isolates were tested for some antibiotics (gentamycin, amoxicillin, ciprofloxacin, vancomycin, erythromycin, penicillin, chloranphenicol). The results revealed no statistical difference (P >0.05) between sites of the carcasses and critical points during slaughtering process. The isolated bacteria were *E. coli*, *Salmonella* spp., *Proteous* spp., *Pseudomonas* spp. and *Staphylococcus* spp. The poultry carcasses can be contaminated at any stage of slaughtering process. Therefore, hygienic measures must be managed to safe broiler meat for human consumption.

Keywords
Bacteria, Broilers, Drug, Contamination

Introduction

The consumption of poultry meat increased worldwide within the last decades (FAO, 1993; McNamara, 1997; Mead, 1997). Competition for an increased share of the poultry meat market centers on lowering the price, thus making poultry more attractive for the consumers. Therefore, modern poultry processing requires a high rate of throughput to meat consumers demand. With complete mechanization and automation, the number of slaughtered birds in many processing plants can reach 12000 birds per hour (Jame et al., 2000). During the slaughter process of poultry different microorganisms contaminate meat and most frequently Gram-positive rod and micrococi and also Gram-negative bacteria in final product, including enterobacteria (Mead, 1989; Zivkovic, 2001; Kozacinski et al., 2006). Foodborne pathogens can be introduced also to the food during processing, storage and preparation from infected humans who handle the food or by cross contamination from other raw agricultural products (Hodberg et al., 1994). Dirty worker hands, clothes, equipments of slaughterhouse acted as intermediate sources of contamination of meat (Gill, 1998; Gilmour et al., 2004; Abdelsadig, 2006; Abdalla et al.,
After evisceration with poor hygienic management considered as sources of microbial contamination. Also bacterial contamination on processed broiler carcasses can be originated from farms (Plant, environment, equipments and employees). Therefore the hygienic measures must be from farm which considers impact on the health of both animals and humans working in the poultry meat industry (Ahmed et al., 2013). The contamination by bacteria can be caused on food in different parts of the carcass at any stage of operation (Kabour et al., 2012). Bacterial contamination by Salmonella spp. using viable counts (Omer et al., 2016) considered highest after washing and chilling than E. coli. Also bad drainage was identified to be most important rich factor associated with Salmonella spp. (Rammad et al., 2014). Bird feathers participated in bacteria and contamination with table for manual pluck finishing during processed meat poultry and this leading to increase the bacterial load (Morar et al., 2008). Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) is well-accepted systemic program for identification and control of microbiological hazards in all steps of poultry processing and industries and must be implemented this program to serve both external and internal market (Unnevehr and Jensen, 1996; McNamara, 1997; Jimenez et al., 2002; Galhardo et al., 2006). The modern poultry industries can produce market ready broiler chickens in less than six weeks and this done through genetic selection, improved feeds and keen health management practices involving usage of antibiotic as therapeutic agents to treat bacterial diseases in intensive farming system (Apata, 2009). Resistant strains from the poultry gut readily soil poultry carcasses and when consume by human that alter his endogenous flora (Vander Bogaard and Stobberingh, 2001). Gene transferoccurs majorly in vivo between bacteria and gastrointestinal tract bacteria and pathogenic bacteria and identical resistant genes are present in diverse bacterial species from different hosts (Scott, 2002). The aim of the study to identify bacteria contaminated poultry carcasses and to determine the most effective antibiotic to isolated bacteria.

### Materials and Methods

#### Area of the study

The swab samples were collected from broiler modern abattoir in Khartoum state- Sudan.

#### Collection of samples

A total of 154 swab samples were taken from the breast, back, leg and neck after hanging in the slaughter area, after bleeding, after scalding, after washing, after chilling, from slaughtering knives, scalding water, packing machine and hands of the workers (Bryan, 1980). The organism was removed from each swab by shaking for a few minutes in 10 ml sterile 0.5% peptone water.

#### Bacteriology

The isolation and identification of bacteria were carried out according to the methods of Barroow and Feltham (2003). The viable count (TVCs) of the isolated microorganism was also used (Harrigan and MacCance, 1976).

#### Antibiotic sensitivity test

All bacteria isolated were tested for resistance to some antibiotic and these were gentamyin (Gen), amoxicillin (Amc), ciprofloxacin(Cip), vancomycin (Van), erythromycin(Ery), penicillin(P), chlorophenicol (C), (Maxi care medical laboratories Ltd, Nigeria) . The sensitivity test was used as described by Prescett et al., (2005).
Statistical analysis

The collected data were analyzed with SPSS software (Statistical Package for the Social Science, version II.5SSPS Inc and Chicago, IL, USA). All bacterial counts were converted to \( \log_{10} \text{CFU} / \text{Cm}^2 \) for analysis and ANOVA were performed. Statistical significance was set at \( P \) value of <0.05.

Results and Discussion

As shown in Table 1 the highest level of TVCs in the breast \( 8.15\pm0.10 \), the back \( 5.5 \pm 0.10 \) and the neck \( 9.50 \pm 0.10 \) after evisceration. But the level increased in the leg \( 6.6\pm0.10 \) after bleeding. Statistically, there was no significant difference (\( P >0.05 \)). The high level of contamination by \( E. \text{coli} \) was 62.5% after defeathering and \( \text{Salmonella} \) spp. was 50.0% after chilling, while \( \text{Proteus} \) spp. the contamination was (12.5%) at hanging, after scalding and after washing. But the bacterial level increased due to \( \text{Pseudomonas} \) spp. at washing only. The contamination of \( \text{Staphylococcus} \) spp. was 62.5% after scalding (Table 2).

Table 1: Comparison of Total viable count of bacteria (\( \log_{10} \text{CFU}/ \text{Cm}^2 \)) at different sites and operational points (No. 154) in broiler abattoir Khartoum state

| Sites          | A       | B       | C       | D       | E       | F       | G       | p-value |
|---------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Breast        | 5.35±0.04 | 5.56±0.10 | 3.62±0.50 | 6.48±0.10 | 8.15±0.10 | 5.54±0.10 | 3.45±0.04 | NS      |
| Back          | 3.34±0.04 | 4.60±0.01 | 5.38±0.10 | 5.29±0.10 | 5.56±0.10 | 2.13±0.03 | 5.46±0.10 | NS      |
| Leg           | 5.50±0.04 | 6.60±0.10 | 4.27±0.10 | 4.33±0.01 | 4.56±0.10 | 4.66±0.10 | 3.62±0.05 | NS      |
| Neck          | 6.38±0.04 | 5.65±0.10 | 4.61±0.10 | 5.57±0.10 | 9.50±0.10 | 6.54±0.10 | 5.54±0.10 | NS      |

Table 2: The number of bacteria isolated from operational points of the carcasses in broiler carcasses in abattoir, Khartoum state

| CCPs                | E. coli | Salmonella | Proteus | Pseudomonas | Staphylococcus |
|---------------------|---------|------------|---------|-------------|----------------|
| At hanging (n=16)   | 0 (0.0%)| 6 (37.5%) | 2 (12.5%)| 0 (0.0%)    | 8 (50%)        |
| After bleeding (n=16)| 4 (25%) | 4 (25%)   | 0 (0.0%)| 0 (0.0%)    | 8 (50%)        |
| After scalding (n=16)| 2 (12.5%) | 2 (12.5%) | 2 (12.5%)| 0 (0.0%)    | 10 (62.5%)     |
| After defeathering (n=16)| 10 (62.5%) | 2 (12.5%) | 0 (0.0%)| 0 (0.0%)    | 4 (25%)        |
| After evisceration (n=16)| 8 (50%) | 4 (25%)   | 0 (0.0%)| 0 (0.0%)    | 4 (25%)        |
| After washing (n=16) | 8 (50%) | 2 (12.5%) | 2 (12.5%)| 2 (12.5%)   | 2 (12.5%)      |
| After chilling (n=16)| 6 (37.5%) | 8 (50%)   | 0 (0.0%)| 0 (0.0%)    | 2 (12.5%)      |
| Total (n=112)       | 38      | 28        | 6       | 2           | 38             |
Table 3: Bacterial contamination in control points in broilers – Khartoum state

| CCPs                  | Count $\log_{10}$CFU/cm$^2$ | Isolated bacteria          |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
|                       |                              | E. coli | Salmonella | Proteus | Pseudomonas | Staphylococcus |
| Slaughter Knife (n=6) | 4.43                         | 3 (50%) | 2 (33.30%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 2 (33.30%) |
| Scalding water (n=6)  | 2.54                         | 0 (0.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 2 (33.30%) | 4 (66.70%) | 0 (0.00%) |
| Packing machine (n=6) | 2.59                         | 1 (16.70%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 4 (66.70%) |
| Total (n=18)          | -                            | 4       | 2          | 2        | 4          | 6          |

Table 4: Isolated bacteria from the hands of the workers (n=24) at some control points in broiler abattoir – Khartoum state

| Point                  | Hands of workers          |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
|                        | Count $\log_{10}$CFU/cm$^2$ | E. coli | Salmonella | Proteus | Pseudomonas | Staphylococcus |
| At hanging (n=6)       | 5.54                      | 0 (0.00%) | 1 (16.7%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 2 (33.3%) |
| During evisceration (n=6) | 9.49                  | 0 (0.00%) | 1 (16.7%) | 1 (16.7%) | 2 (33.3%) | 2 (33.3%) |
| Cutting (n=6)          | 5.48                      | 4 (66.7%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 1 (16.7%) |
| Packing (n=6)          | 3.58                      | 1 (16.7%) | 1 (16.7%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 4 (66.7%) |
| Total (n=24)           | -                         | 5       | 3          | 2        | 2          | 9          |

Table 5: Susceptibility of contaminated bacteria at control points in abattoir, Khartoum state

| Antibiotic | Staphylococcus | E. coli | Proteus | Salmonella | Pseudomonas |
|------------|----------------|---------|---------|------------|-------------|
| Gem/10     | 3.0            | 2.5     | 2.4     | 2.4        | 2.3         |
| Ame/10     | 2.8            | 2.4     | 2.4     | 2.2        | 2.0         |
| Cip/5      | 2.5            | 2.5     | 2.2     | 2.3        | 2.1         |
| Van/30     | 2.3            | 2.4     | 2.3     | 2.2        | 2.1         |
| E/10       | 1.5            | 1.6     | 1.5     | 1.4        | 1.2         |
| P/10       | 0.9            | 0.8     | 0.8     | 0.7        | 0.8         |
| C/30       | 0.9            | 0.9     | 0.7     | 0.5        | 0.5         |

Gem: Gentamycin, Amc: Amoxicillin, Cip: Ciprofloxacin, Van: Vancomycin, E: Erythromycin; P: Penicillin and C: Chloranphenicol

The total viable count and contaminated bacteria of slaughter knives, scalding water and packing machine were shown in table 3. The organism E. coli was high in knives, but Pseudomonas spp. in scalding water and Staphylococcus spp. in packing machine. In table 4, the TVCs was high during evisceration (9.49 $\log_{10}$CFU/cm$^2$), but low in packing machine (3.58$log_{10}$CFU/cm$^2$). While high level of contamination of E. coli(66.7%) at cutting, whereas Staphylococcus (66.7%) at packing. Table 5 summarized the sensitivity of bacteria isolated and all isolates were sensitive to gentamycin.

In the present study, there is no significant difference between the sites of the carcasses and critical operational points (P > 0.05) in (Table 1). This indicated that broilers can be contaminated by bacteria specially human
pathogenic bacteria (Goksoy et al., 2004). The presence of *E. coli* and *Salmonella* spp. in all critical points (Table 2, 3 and 4) showed that these bacteria contaminated birds from farms and transportation (Kabour et al., 2012; Ahmed et al., 2013). The feathers and evisceration were considered the source of contamination of these gram negative bacteria (Morar et al., 2008; Mohamed –Noor et al., 2012). The species *Salmonella* in this study (Table 1) increases after chilling and this result in accordance with result of Afshin et al., (2013) who reported that food borne disease caused by microorganism contaminated poultry meat. Also the presence of this organism after chilling in agreement with Thomas and McKeckin (1980); Rammad et al., (2014). But this result in contrast with Yang et al., (2002) who said that this species do not grow after chilling. The study showed that *E. coli*, *Pseudomonas* spp. and *Salmonella* spp. are bacteria contaminated broilers meat, this is in agreement with study of Jeffery et al., (2003), Mead (2004) and Kabour et al., (2012) who reported that the hands of the workers are the source of contamination. In these results *Proteus* spp. and *Staphylococcus* spp. were found in control points. The contamination by these organisms may be due to farm litter or improper slaughtering process Mohamed –Noor et al., 2012; Ahmed et al., 2014, in this study all isolated bacteria were sensitive to gentamycin (Table 5). This amino glycoside is considered to be the drug of choice for treatment of bacterial infections, because of broad spectrum mechanism action in cell bacteria (Adams, 2001). In conclusion poultry carcasses can be contaminated at any critical control points, but applying of slandered methods of hygiene leading to safe broiler meat for consumption.

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How to cite this article:

Elshinnawi, M. E., M. I. M. Fangama, Y. A. Shuaib, E. S. M. Siham and Adalla, M. A. 2020. Study of Microbial Contamination in Broilers and Drug Sensitivity in Modern Abattoirs in Khartoum State- Sudan. Int.J.Curr.Microbiol.App.Sci. 9(12): 155-161.
doi: https://doi.org/10.20546/ijcmas.2020.912.021