Prevalence of multidrug-resistant extended spectrum beta-lactamase-producing Salmonella strains in commercial raw chicken meat

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Abstract

The incidence of extended spectrum beta-lactamase (ESBL)-producing pathogens is worrisome because it confers multiple drug resistance (MDR). Considering their serious clinical significance, the study investigated the prevalence of MDR-ESBL-producing Salmonella strains isolated from raw chicken meat in Southern Nigeria. A total of 240 raw chicken meat were sampled and the recovered Salmonella strains were characterized for MDR and ESBL-genes using Kirby Bauer disc diffusion and molecular techniques. Of the 52 confirmed Salmonella enterica serotypes, 67.31% (35/52) were Salmonella entericasubsp. enterica subsp. enterica, 32.68% (17/52) were Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica subsp. enterica, 78.85% (41/52) were ESBL-producer, and 32.68% (46/52) were multidrug resistant. Ampicillin (96.15%) and gentamycin (40.39%) were the most and least antibiotics. The most prevalent MDR-ESBL-genes were blaCTX-M (92.68%), followed by blaSHV genes (68.29%) and blaTEM (31.71%). This study showed that Salmonella serotypes with high ESBL-genes and MDR were prevalent in raw chicken meat vended in southern Nigerian markets.

Keywords: ESBL-producing Salmonella; Multidrug-resistance; Chicken meat; Ampicillin

Introduction

World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food Agriculture Organization (FAO) have separately declared Salmonella as the most prevalent and important zoonosis since 1950 (Antunes et al., 2016; Mouttotou et al., 2017). This has culminated to its inclusion of the bacterium in the terrestrial animal health code of WHO (Mouttotou et al., 2017). Coburn et al. (2007) stated that In humans, typhoid disease is known to manifest one to twoweeks following bacterial inoculation with generalized fever and malaise, abdominal pain with or without other symptoms which include; headache, myalgias, nausea, anorexia and constipation. Majowicz et al. (2010) estimated that annually about 94 million non-typhoid Salmonella gastroenteritis cases culminating in 155,000 deaths occurred. The authors also reported that the majority of the disease burden was in the South-East Asian and the Western Pacific Regions respectively. Most human salmonellosis cases are foodborne, but each year, infections are also acquired through direct or indirect animal contact in homes, veterinary clinics, zoos, farm environments or other public, professional or private settings. Majowicz et al. (2010) observed that approximately 80.3 million of 93.8 million human Salmonella-linked gastroenteritis cases—that have been diagnosed yearly worldwide; are foodborne, thus representing about 86% of human salmonellosis cases. Mouttotou et al. (2017) estimated that approximately 55% of human Salmonella incidences were of foodborne origin, 14% were travel-related, 13% are transmitted through environmental sources.

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9% occurred due to direct human-to-human transmission and 9% were linked to direct animal contact. A majority of Salmonella outbreaks in the last ten years have been linked to poultry reservoir (Dao et al., 2016; Lamas et al., 2018). Meremo et al. (2012) observed that although infections triggered by Salmonella spp. are self-limiting in healthy individuals, some become serious infections in immune compromised individuals such as HIV/AIDS victims, elders, pregnant women and children where care must be under taken. However, treatment with antibiotics is vital for the proper management of severe or invasive human salmonellosis (Yhiler and Bassey, 2015).

Antibiotics have been utilized in both humans and animal feeds for treatment, disease prevention and control, and growth promotion (Dao et al., 2016). The occurrence of resistance in Salmonella isolates to routinely utilized antimicrobials is on the rise both in the veterinary and public health area due to their extensive usage both in humans and in veterinary medicine (Ata et al., 2015; Noenchat, 2018). Molla et al. (2003) and Van Duijkeren et al. (2003) observed that several Salmonella serotypes could acquire resistance to antibiotics in food animals before transmission to humans through the food chain. The authors also reported that the increased resistance rates and growing up of multidrug resistant strains (MDR) has made the treatment of Salmonella infections more difficult. Multidrug resistance and reduced susceptibility of non-typhoidal Salmonella (NTS) to ciprofloxacin have been reported from humans and chicken products in some African countries including Nigeria (Gordon et al., 2008). Eng et al. (2015) and Douglas et al. (2015) described several risk factors associated with the transmission of MDR Salmonella from poultry to humans include; the consumption of food or water contaminated with Salmonella spp. or the consumption of salmonellosis infected poultry products.

Fig. 1. Map of Nigeria showing the study area (Ogu and Akinbosun, 2019)
Recent reports on the isolation of *Salmonella* serotypes with large extended spectrum beta-lactamases (ESBLs) plasmid genes from processed meat and poultry (Ata et al., 2015; Ziecha et al., 2016; Parvinet et al., 2020) is of great public health importance because of the possible transmission of their plasmid-encoded resistant genes to humans (Evers et al., 2017). The presence of extended spectrum beta-lactamases (ESBLs) genes confers on them multi-drug resistances abilities up to the third and fourth generations of cephalosporins, monobactams and carbapenems (Bradford, 2001). ESBLs are reported to be associated with high multidrug resistance and consequently higher mortality, morbidity and cost of chemotherapy (Bradford, 2001; Leverstein-van Hall et al., 2011; Seiffert et al., 2013). In Nigeria, there is still scanty data on the characterized levels of multidrug resistant and ESBL-producing *Salmonella* strains in chicken meat. Hence, this study investigated the extended-spectrum beta-lactamase-producing *Salmonella* in raw chicken meat vended in within southern Nigerian markets.

**Materials and methods**

**Study area**

The study areas included four major open markets in South-Southern Nigeria (Fig. 1), namely, Oja-Oba and Effurun main markets situated in Delta State (5.7040°N, 5.9339°E) and Ondo State (6.9149°N, 5.1478°E) respectively, as well as Oja-Oba and Oba markets situated in Ekiti State (7.1900°N, 5.3110°E) and Edo State (6.6342°N, 5.9304°E) respectively.

**Collection of sample**

The sampling regime was carried out between October 2017 and September 2020. The samples were collected using the simple random sampling methods from open markets in Delta, Edo, Ondo and Ekiti State, southern Nigeria. The portions of the chilled raw chicken meat used for bacteriological analysis included both the skin and its muscle tissues. Two hundred and forty chicken (240) meat samples were collected from all the markets that were sampled. The samples were placed in sterile stomacher bags and sealed appropriately. All the samples were conveyed to the laboratory after collection in black polyethylene bags placed within ice packs (WHO, 2010).

**Isolation of *Salmonella***

Isolation of *Salmonella* spp. in the raw chicken meat was performed by the meat rinse centrifugation-plating technique as previously described (Line et al., 2001; Rodrigo et al., 2006; Cox et al., 2014). Twenty-five gram portions of each chicken meat sample were cut into small pieces with sterile forceps/scissors and placed in a sterile bag containing 150 ml sterile 0.1% buffered peptone water (Becton and Dickinson, USA). The chicken meat was massaged and rotated in the sterile bag for at least 2 minutes to rinse the meat into the peptone water. Twenty-five millilitre (25 ml) of the rinsate was collected in a sterile bottle and centrifuged at 4470 g for 20 minutes, followed by the removal of 1 ml sediment that was used to make serial dilutions up to $10^6$. Ten micro liters of each of the dilutions was spread plated on to sterile duplicate Petri dishes containing Xylose Lysine Deoxycholate (XLD) agar supplemented with novobiocin (15 mg/l). The inoculated plates were then incubated at 37°C for 48 hours. After incubation, colonies were sub-cultured and characterized

**Phenotypic characterization of *Salmonella* isolates**

The phenotypic techniques employed for the genus-level identification of presumptive *Salmonella* colonies were performed by standard methods (Krieg and Holt, 1984). Phenotypic tests performed in distinct presumptive *Salmonella* colonies that were picked from the Petri plates included Gram staining, triple sugar iron utilization, citrate utilization, urea utilization, indole production, methyl red test, Voges-Proskauer test, oxidase test, motility test, coagulase test, catalase test and haemolysis test.

**Serological characterization of *Salmonella* isolates**

Confirmed *Salmonella* isolates that were identified by the phenotypic tests and 16SrRNA gene sequence analysis were used for the serological examination. The antigenic formula of a pure *Salmonella* culture was identified by a slide agglutination test that was performed by separately mixing one drop of the different *Salmonella* O and H antisera with a saline emulsion of the pure culture on a slide for 1 minute followed by observing for agglutination using indirect lighting over a dark background. The antigenic formula derived upon completion of the agglutination tests was used to identify the *Salmonella* serotype by referring to a Kauffmann-White reference scheme (Kauffmann, 1974).

**Molecular characterization of *Salmonella* isolates**

Species-level identification employed a technique which involved partial 16SrRNA gene analysis that was performed by polymerase chain reaction (PCR) and sequencing methods (Lane, 1991). Ultrapure DNA templates were extracted from the identified *Salmonella* isolates using the Zymo-Spin
column as prescribed by the manufacturer (Zymo Research Corporation, Irvine, CA, USA). Universal 16SrRNA bacterial primers (27F 5’AGAGTTTGATCCTGGCTCAG; 1492R 5’GGTTACCTT GTGACA CTTG; 1466 base pair) (Lane, 1991) often employed for bacterial taxonomy was used to determine the presence of 16SrRNA gene in the *Salmonella* isolates and *Salmonella enterica* subsp. *enterica* serovar Typhimurium ATCC 14028 used as a positive control strain for the PCR. The DNA sequencing of PCR products was performed by the dideoxy chain termination method (Sanger *et al.*, 1977). The PCR products were cleaned up with ExoSAP-IT (ThermoFisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) and subjected to cycle sequencing with the Big Dye Terminator version 3.1 (Applied Biosystems) using standard cycling conditions followed by quality checking and proofreading with Sequencher version 4.10.1 (Gene Codes Corporation, Ann Arbor, MI). Comparison of the experimentally derived nucleotide sequences (query sequences) against the reference sequence database (rRNA_typestrains/prokaryotic_16S_ribosomal_RNA) was performed with BLASTN 2.8.0+ program (National Center for Biotechnology Information [NCBI]) to confirm the species of the *Salmonella* isolates.

**Antibiotics susceptibility test**

Each of the *Salmonella* isolates used for phenotypic tests and 16S rRNA gene analysis was tested for multidrug resistance with the Kirby Bauer disc diffusion test as prescribed by the Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute (CLSI, 2014). Inhibitory zone diameter around each of the *Salmonella* colonies was interpreted as sensitive, intermediate or resistant based on zone diameter interpretative standards stipulated by the Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute. *Staphylococcus aureus* ATCC 25923 was used as reference strains to detect any potential errors in the disc diffusion susceptibility test. Ampicillin (10 µg), Amoxycillin/Clavulanic acid (20 µg), Amikacin (30 µg), Ceftazidime (30 µg), Cefotaxime (30 µg), Ceftriaxone (30 µg), Streptomycin (10 µg), Tobramycin (20 µg), Gentamycin (10 µg), Nalidixic acid (30 µg), Ofloxacine (5 µg), Ciprofloxacine (5 µg), Sulfamethoxazole/trimethoprim (25 µg), Tetracycline (30 µg) and Chloramphenicol (30 µg) were the antibiotic discs (Abtek Biologicals Ltd., UK) that were tested.

**Estimation of multiple antibiotic resistance indices**

The multiple antibiotic resistance indices (MAR) of the *Salmonella* isolates were determined according to the method prescribed by Krumperman (1983). Applying Equation 1, a calculated MAR value of greater than 0.2 indicated a high-risk source of acquiring multidrug-resistant *Salmonella* from these samples.

\[
\text{MAR} = \frac{\sum (AR)}{A \times B} 
\]

MAR is the mean multiple antibiotic resistance indices. \(AR\) is the antibiotic resistance scores of each *Salmonella* isolate (AR is defined as the sum of antibiotic classes to which a particular *Salmonella* isolate exhibited resistance). \(A\) is the total number of antibiotic classes tested. \(B\) is the total count of *Salmonella* isolates examined.

**Phenotypic characterization ESBL**

The Phenotypic characterization of Extended-Spectrum Beta-lactamases (ESBL)-producing *Salmonella* isolates was determined by double disc synergy test (DDST) and the combination disc test as previously described (CLSI, 2014). *Salmonella enterica* subsp. *enterica* serovar Typhimurium ATCC 14028 was used as a positive control strain for the ESBL production test.

**Molecular Characterization of the ESBL genes**

Characterization of the *Salmonella* isolates exhibiting ESBL phenotypes were further analyzed to detect their ESBL gene variants by PCR and DNA sequencing of the ESBL-encoding genes (*bla*<sub>SHV</sub>, *bla*<sub>TEM</sub>, and *bla*<sub>CTX-M</sub>). The primers employed for ESBL confirmation are shown in (Table I). The PCRs were performed in a MyCycler PCR system (Bio-Rad, Hercules, CA). The PCR assay was carried out in a 0.2 ml thin wall tube. Each tube consisted of a 25 µl mixture containing 1.5 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 0.2 µM of each primer, 200 µM of each of the deoxynucleoside triphosphates (dNTPs), 1.5 U of Taq polymerase (Cinna Gen, Tehran, Iran) and 2.0 µl of DNA template. The PCR cycling condition for *blaCTX-M* and *blaSHV* was maintained as follows: initial denaturation at 94°C for 7 minutes; 30 cycles of amplification with denaturation at 94°C for 30 seconds; annealing at 57°C for 30 seconds; extension at 72°C for 30 seconds and a final extension at 72°C for 5 minutes. For the *blaTEM* gene, the PCR cycling condition was the same as those for *blaCTX-M* and *blaSHV* except that the annealing temperature for *blaTEM* gene was maintained at 53°C.

The PCR products were subsequently run on a 2% agarose gel and sequencing performed as previously described. Comparison of the experimentally derived nucleotide sequences
(query sequences) against the reference sequence database (non-redundant protein sequences) was performed with BLASTX 2.8.0+ program (NCBI) to identify the specific class A extended-spectrum beta-lactamases expressed by the ESBL genes in the multidrug-resistant Salmonella isolates. All non-redundant GenBank CDS translations + PDB + SwissProt + PIR + PRF excluding environmental samples from WGS projects were searched for protein sequences that were homologous to the translated nucleotide query sequences of each of the multidrug-resistant Salmonella isolates.

Data analysis

Descriptive statistics of Salmonella counts and prevalence datasets was performed with NCSS version 12 data analysis software. Also performed with NCSS ver. 12 data analysis was the Shapiro–Wilk normality test and Fisher (F) one-way ANOVA test for normally distributed datasets. The test of hypothesis was considered statistically significant if the achieved level of significance (p) was less than 0.05.

Results and discussion

A total of 240 raw chicken meat samples were investigated for the presence of Salmonella species. Of the 229 presumptive Salmonella isolates characterized, 52 isolates were confirmed as Salmonella species. The phenotypic characteristics of the isolates are shown in Table II. These were in agreement with the reported characteristics expected of the Genus Salmonella (Cheesbrough, 2000). Salmonella enterica has been reported as bacterium that constantly prevalent in raw chicken meat and retailing materials/environments (Ogu and Akinnibosun, 2019) and thus our finding is in line with the findings of previous workers who also detected S. enterica in the commercial raw chicken meat samples that they investigated (Akbar and Kumar 2013; Pedro et al., 2016; Ugwu et al., 2019). Moreover, our finding is in discordance with the findings of Cretu et al. (2009) reported that Salmonella was absent in poultry products collected from Sweden. The reason for the variation was attributed majorly to the stringent compliance of chicken meat processors and poultry breeders to the governmental statutory programs established by the Swedish government.

| Parameter          | Test Results                                                                 |
|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Grams reaction     | (-) short rods                                                               |
| Motility           | (+)                                                                          |
| Catalase           | (+)                                                                          |
| Urease             | (-)                                                                          |
| Coagulase          | (-)                                                                          |
| Citrate            | (-)                                                                          |
| Indole             | (-)                                                                          |
| Triple sugar iron  | Alkaline slant with acid but and gas                                         |
| H₂S production     | (+)                                                                          |

Table II. Phenotypic characterization of Salmonella isolates
Table III shows the antigenic formula of the serological test carried out on the confirm isolates. It was observed that all the confirmed Salmonella isolates investigated belonged to two serotypes, namely, Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimurium and Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Enteritidis. Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimurium occurred more frequently (35/52; 67.31%) in relation to Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Enteritidis (17/52; 32.69%). The results of serological assay from this study significantly agreed with the work of Abdel-Aziz (2016) who identified S. Typhimurium, S. Enteritidis and S. Kentucky in the chicken meat samples that were examined. S. enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimurium and S. enterica subsp. enterica serovar Enteritidis have been variously asserted to be the most frequently isolated serovars that cause foodborne outbreaks in the world (Herikstad et al., 2002; Ibrahim et al., 2014). GenBank accession numbers for representative Salmonella serotypes isolated from the raw chicken meat samples were Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimurium strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 234 (MW426267), Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Enteritidisstrain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 235 (MW426268), Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimuriumstrain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 236 (MW426269), Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimurium strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 237 (MW63955), Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimurium strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 238 (MW639905), Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Enteritidis strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 239 (MW641980).

**Table III. Serological characterization of Salmonella isolates**

| Antigenic formula | Isolate (n=52) |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 1,4,[5],12:i:1.2  | Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimurium (n=35) |
| 1,9,12:[f],g,m,[p]:[1,7] | Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Enteritidis (n=17) |

**Fig. 2. PCR showing 16S rRNA gene amplification in some of the Salmonella isolates obtained from commercial raw chicken meat**

S1: (Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimurium strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 237 16SrRNA gene); S2: (Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimurium strain rRNA gene); S4: (Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimurium 16S rRNA gene); S5: (Salmonella enteri OGUAKINNIBOSUN 238 16SrRNA gene); S3: (Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Enteritidis strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 239 16S rRNA gene); S6: (Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimurium 16S rRNA gene); PC: Positive control (Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimurium ATCC 14028 16S rRNA gene); NC: Negative control (Sterile water); bp: Base pair; L: Molecular ladder (100 base ladder).
Valentin et al. (2014) reported in this study, Huijbers confirmed 41 isolates as multidrug-resistant ESBL-producing Salmonella enterica. GenBank accession numbers of all the strains used to implement the phylogenetic tree are indicated in parenthesis. The tree was rooted on midpoint and only bootstrap values that were above 50% are displayed on branches.

Table IV. Antibiotic resistance pattern of the Salmonella isolates

| Antibiotic | Delta (n=14) | Ondo (n=9) | Edo (n=23) | Ekiti (n=6) | Total (n=52) |
|------------|--------------|------------|------------|-------------|--------------|
| AMC (20 µg)| 64.29        | 77.78      | 82.61      | 50.00       | 73.08        |
| AMP (10 µg)| 100.00       | 100.00     | 95.65      | 83.33       | 96.15        |
| AK (30 µg) | 50.00        | 77.78      | 73.91      | 0.00        | 59.62        |
| CTX (30 µg)| 50.00        | 77.78      | 52.17      | 0.00        | 50.00        |
| CAZ (30 µg)| 50.00        | 77.78      | 82.61      | 50.00       | 69.23        |
| CRO (30 µg)| 50.00        | 77.78      | 65.22      | 0.00        | 55.77        |
| CN (10 µg) | 50.00        | 77.78      | 30.44      | 0.00        | 40.39        |
| TOB (20 µg)| 71.43        | 77.78      | 82.61      | 50.00       | 75.00        |
| STR (10 µg)| 100.00       | 100.00     | 100.00     | 83.33       | 98.08        |
| CIP (5 µg) | 50.00        | 77.78      | 56.52      | 0.00        | 51.92        |
| NAL (30 µg)| 64.29        | 77.78      | 82.61      | 50.00       | 73.08        |
| OFX (5 µg) | 85.71        | 88.89      | 91.30      | 83.33       | 88.46        |
| SXT (25 µg)| 57.14        | 77.78      | 82.61      | 50.00       | 71.15        |
| TET (30 µg)| 85.71        | 88.89      | 91.30      | 83.33       | 88.46        |
| CAM (30 µg)| 57.14        | 77.78      | 82.61      | 50.00       | 71.15        |
| MR         | 12           | 8          | 21         | 5           | 46           |
| ∑AR        | 75           | 55         | 144        | 29          | 303          |
| A          | 7            | 7          | 7          | 7           | 7            |
| MAR        | 0.77         | 0.87       | 0.89       | 0.69        | 0.83         |

AMC: Amoxycillin/Clavulanic acid; AMP: Ampicillin; AK: Amikacin; CTX: Cefotaxime; CAZ: Cefazidime; CRO: Ceftriaxone; CN: Gentamycin; TOB: Tobramycin; STR: Streptomycin; CIP: Ciprofloxacin; NAL: Nalidixic acid; OFX: Ofloxacin; SXT: Sulfamethoxazole/Trimethoprim; TET: Tetracycline; CAM: Chloramphenicol; MR: Counts of multidrug-resistant Salmonella; AR: Antibiotic resistance scores; A: Counts of antibiotic classes; MAR: Mean multiple antibiotic resistance indices. Zone diameter interpretive standards stipulated by the Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute were used to determine the susceptibility or resistance of the selected antibiotics to the Salmonella species isolated from the raw chicken meat samples.
The molecular characterization of the isolates using the 16SrRNA gene PCR sequencing test showed that *S. enterica* were the main species present in the chicken meat samples as shown in Fig. 2 and 3. PCR amplifications yielded products of 1466 bp for the selected isolates. This is the anticipated base pair (bp) size of the samples recorded positive for *Salmonella*, according to the Genus-specific PCR reaction applied in this study, in reference to Lane, (1991).

The antibiotic resistance profile of *Salmonella* isolates obtained from the chicken meat samples is presented in Table IV. Of the 52 *Salmonella* isolates tested, 46 *Salmonella* isolates were found to be multidrug-resistant. Multidrug-resistant *Salmonella* isolates were most prevalent in raw chicken meat samples vended in Edo State and least prevalent in Ekiti State. Overall, the *Salmonella* isolates were most resistant to ampicillin (96.15%) but were more sensitive to gentamycin (40.39%). Amongst the *Salmonella* isolates obtained from the chicken meat samples collected from the different sampling locations, MAR ranged from 0.69 to 0.87. Overall, MAR was estimated at 0.83. These MAR values in the raw chicken meat samples collected from all the sampling locations exceeded the recommended limit of 0.2, thus, indicating that raw chicken meat from South Southern Nigeria were a source of multidrug-resistant *Salmonella* with a probable significant health risk. Antunes *et al.* (2016), Ugwu *et al.* (2019) and Parvin *et al.* (2020) have also detected multidrug-resistant *Salmonella* in chicken meat samples. Thus, poultry products are currently identified as a public health concern. The huge data on the association of multidrug-resistant *Salmonella* with chicken meat is extremely worrying due to the probable resistance of *Salmonella* to an array of antibiotics that are clinically relevant (Antunes *et al.*, 2016).

The prevalence of presumptive *Salmonella*, multidrug-resistant *Salmonella* and multidrug-resistant ESBL-producing *Salmonella* present in the raw chicken meat samples are presented in Table V. Overall, the prevalence of presumptive *Salmonella*, multidrug-resistant *Salmonella* and multidrug-resistant ESBL-producing *Salmonella* were respectively estimated at 22.71%, 20.09% and 17.90%. The datasets of counts of multidrug-resistant *Salmonella* and multidrug-resistant ESBL-producing *Salmonella* were also found to be normally distributed (p = 0.61 and 0.54 respectively). Based on the results of the normality test, parametric Fisher one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests within each of the datasets indicated no significant difference (p = 0.72, 0.55 and 0.52 for presumptive *Salmonella*, multidrug-resistant *Salmonella* and multidrug-resistant ESBL-producing *Salmonella* respectively). The prevalence reported in this study were lower than those reported by Zeich *et al.* (2016) and Parvin *et al.* (2020) who worked conveyor belts of broiler cutting rooms in Brazilian broiler processing plants and with frozen chicken meat in Bangladesh, respectively. Similarly, higher prevalence rate of multiple drug resistant and ESBL producing *Salmonella* from chicken at retail markets in Guangdong, China (Zhang *et al*., 2018). The difference could be attributed to the differences in distribution of the serotypes in the chicken samples. The ANOVA test between the Salmo-
nella datasets also indicated no significant difference (p = 0.54). Overall, the prevalence of chilled raw chicken meat contaminated with *Salmonella* was estimated at 0.17 (40/240). This value of prevalence exceeded the limits (≤ 0.1) set by the Meat Industry Guide, United Kingdom (MIG, 2017). Improper handling by workers and poor hygienic conditions of meat processing plant, as well as the meat retailing environment are the probable sources of contamination of chicken meat sold in the open markets (Maharjan *et al*., 2019). Improper slaughtering and manual evisceration process of the raw chicken meat intestinal contents could also be an important source of contamination of the meat with *Salmonella* species.

| Table V. Prevalence of *Salmonella* (S), multidrug-resistant (MRS) and multidrug-resistant ESBL-producing *Salmonella* (MREPS) present in the raw chicken meat |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| **Sampling Location** | **Total samples** | **Prevalence** | **Prevalence** | **Prevalence** |
| | | **S** | | **MRS** | | **MREPS** |
| | | **F/X** | **P (%)** | **F/X** | **P (%)** | **F/X** | **P (%)** |
| Delta State | 60 | 14/64 | 21.88 | 12/64 | 18.75 | 10/64 | 15.63 |
| Ondo State | 60 | 9/41 | 21.95 | 8/41 | 19.51 | 7/41 | 17.07 |
| Edo State | 60 | 23/91 | 25.28 | 21/91 | 23.08 | 20/91 | 21.98 |
| Ekiti State | 60 | 6/33 | 18.18 | 5/33 | 15.15 | 4/33 | 12.12 |
| Total | 240 | 52/229 | 22.71 | 46/229 | 20.09 | 41/229 | 17.90 |
The double disc diffusion synergy and combination tests confirmed 41 isolates as multidrug-resistant ESBL-producing *Salmonella* species out of the 46 multidrug-resistant *Salmonella* isolates tested. The sequence analysis of the PCR products (Fig. 4, 5, and 6) with BLASTX software revealed the presence of *bla*TEM, *bla*SHV and *bla*CTX-M genes in the *Salmonella* isolates examined. The *bla*CTX-M genes were found to be the most prevalent genes since they occurred in 92.68% of the multidrug-resistant *Salmonella* isolates examined, while *bla*TEM were the least prevalent beta-lactamase genes (31.71%) amongst the multidrug-resistant *Salmonella* isolates examined. The *bla*SHV genes occurred in 68.29% of the multidrug-resistant *Salmonella* isolates examined. Fifty percent of the multidrug-resistant *Salmonella* isolates co-carried the *bla*CTX-M and *bla*SHV genes, while 34.15% of the isolates co-carried the *bla*CTX-M and *bla*TEM genes. Friese *et al.* (2013), Huijbers *et al.* (2014), Valentin *et al.* (2014), Abdel-Aziz *et al.* (2016), Qiao *et al.* (2017) and Saliu *et al.* (2017) have reported the presence of ESBL in chicken meat. Friese *et al.* (2013) documented that ESBL-producing bacteria relatively occurred more in poultry meat than other types of meat. As was also reported in this study, Huijbers *et al.* (2014) and Valentin *et al.* (2014) indicated that CTX-M-1 appeared to be the most prevalent ESBL in poultry meat. They also reported the presence SHV and TEM in poultry meat. However, an important controversy is whether poultry only serves as a reservoir of ESBL-producing bacteria or is also connected with human infections (Salifu *et al.*, 2017). Gen Bank accession numbers for representative ESBL genes obtained from multidrug-resistant ESBL-producing *Salmonella* serotypes isolated from the chicken meat samples were *S. enterica* subsp. *enterica* serovar *Typhimurium* strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 237 beta-lactamase CTX-M-1 gene (MW662674), *S. enterica* subsp. *entericasubsp. enterica* serovar *Typhimurium* strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 236 beta-lactamase CTX-M-61 gene (MW662688), *S. enterica* subsp. *entericasubsp. entericasubsp. enterica* serovar Enteritidis strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 235 beta-lactamase CTX-M-1 gene (MW662673), *S. enterica* subsp. *enterica* serovar *Typhimurium* strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 234 beta-lactamase CTX-M-1 gene (MW662672), *S. enterica* subsp. *enterica* serovar Enteritidis strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 239 beta-lactamase CTX-M-1 gene (MW662676), *S. enterica* subsp. *enterica* serovar *Typhimurium* strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 238 beta-lactamase CTX-M-1 gene (MW662675), *S. enterica* subsp. *enterica* serovar *Typhimurium* strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 237 beta-lactamase SHV-11 gene (MW662671), *S. enterica* subsp. *enterica* serovar Enteritidis-strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 235 beta-lactamase SHV-11 gene (MW662670), *S. enterica* subsp. *enterica* serovar *Typhimurium* strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 234 beta-lactamase SHV-11 gene (MW662669), *S. enterica* subsp. *enterica* serovar *Typhimurium* strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 236 beta-lactamase TEM gene (MW678648) and *S. enterica* subsp. *enterica* serovar Enteritidis strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 239 beta-lactamase TEM gene (MW678649).

Fig. 4. PCR showing beta-lactamase CTX-M gene amplification in some of the *Salmonella* isolates obtained from commercial raw chicken meat

[A1: (Salmonella enterica subsp. entericasubsp. enterica*serovar Typhimurium* strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 237 beta-lactamase CTX-M-1 gene); A2: (Salmonella enterica subsp. entericasubsp. enterica*serovar*Typhimurium* strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 236 beta-lactamase CTX-M-61 gene); A3: (Salmonella enterica subsp. entericasubsp. enterica*serovar*Enteritidis* strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 235 beta-lactamase CTX-M-1 gene); A4: (Salmonella enterica subsp. entericasubsp. enterica*serovar*Typhimurium* strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 234 beta-lactamase CTX-M-1 gene); A5: (Salmonella enterica subsp. entericasubsp. enterica*serovar*Typhimurium* strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 239 beta-lactamase CTX-M-1 gene); A6: (Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica*serovar*Typhimurium* strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 238 beta-lactamase CTX-M-1 gene); PC: Positive control (Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica*serovar*Virchow* strain 75-22438-1 beta-lactamase CTX-M gene); bp: Base pair; L: Molecular ladder (100 base ladder).
Isolation of Salmonella

Collection of sample

Characterized levels of multidrug resistant and ESBL-producing serotypes could acquire resistance to different kinds of antibiotics in food animals before transmission to humans. Increased resistance rates and growing up of multidrug resistance abilities up to the third and fourth generations of cephalosporins, monobactams and carbapenems, antimicrobial resistance in broilers: A review, and Fedorka-Cray PJ (2015), Biomedicine & Molecular Biology 50(4): 119-123. Multi-drug resistant Salmonella strains in raw chicken

Fig. 5. PCR showing beta-lactamase SHV gene amplification in some of the Salmonella isolates obtained from commercial raw chicken meat

[A1: (Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimurium strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 237 beta-lactamase SHV-11 gene); A2: (Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimurium strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 236 DNA template); A3: (Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Enteritidis strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 235 beta-lactamase SHV-11 gene); A4: (Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimurium strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 234 beta-lactamase SHV-11 gene); A5: (Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimurium strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 239 DNA template); A6: (Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimurium strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 238 DNA template); PC: Positive control (Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Keurmassar strain DAK-2 beta-lactamase SHV gene); bp: Base pair; L: Molecular ladder (100 base ladder);]

Fig 6: PCR showing beta-lactamase TEM gene amplification in some of the Salmonella isolates obtained from commercial raw chicken meat

[A1. (Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimurium strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 237 DNA template); A2: (Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimurium strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 236 beta-lactamase TEM gene); A3: (Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Enteritidis strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 235 DNA template); A4: (Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimuriumstrain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 234 DNA template); A5: (Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Enteritidis strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 239 DNA template); A6: (Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimurium strain OGUAKINNIBOSUN 238 DNA template); PC: Positive control (Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Typhimurium strain ATCC 13311 beta-lactamase TEM gene); bp: Base pair; L: Molecular ladder (100 base ladder).]
Conclusion

This study has shown multidrug resistant and ESBL-producing Salmonella serotypes are prevalent in raw chicken meat retailed within southern Nigerian open markets. The widespread prevalence of MDR and ESBL-producing serotypes could be associated with the extensive use of antibiotics during chicken rearing/production among other unhygienic retailing practices. It is of public health importance because consumers are exposed to the risk of infection by MDR-ESBL-producing Salmonella strains from the contaminated chicken meat. Hence, this further highlights the need for rational use of antibiotics in livestock/poultry farming, proper meat handling/cooking practices, and enforcement of standard food safety by governmental regulatory agencies so as to stem or prevent the risk of MDR-ESBL-bacterial mediated foodborne diseases.

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