

Relationship Dynamics Between Farmers and Veterinarians: A Case Study of Qualitative Approach in Broile Chicken Farming Sector

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the dynamics of the relationship between farmers and veterinarians in the broiler chicken farming sector using a qualitative approach. Through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and document analysis, key themes emerged highlighting the critical role of trust, communication, education, and disease management. Trust and open communication were found to be essential for effective collaboration, enabling better decision-making and adherence to health recommendations. Veterinarians' roles as educators and advisors were highly valued, with their training programs significantly enhancing farmers' knowledge and practices. Timely and accurate disease interventions by veterinarians were crucial in reducing mortality rates and improving productivity. However, challenges such as limited access to medicines and vaccines, and a lack of technical knowledge were identified, underscoring the need for additional support from external entities. This study concludes that a strong, harmonious relationship between farmers and veterinarians is vital for the success and sustainability of broiler chicken farming. Strengthening communication, enhancing educational programs, and ensuring timely health interventions can significantly improve animal welfare and farm productivity, benefiting the broader agricultural industry in Indonesia

Keywords : Agricultural Sustainability; Animal Health Management; Farmer-Veterinarian Relationship

INTRODUCTION

In the broiler chicken farming industry, the relationship between farmers and veterinarians plays a crucial role in ensuring animal health and welfare, as well as the productivity and economic sustainability of the farms. Veterinarians are responsible for diagnosing, preventing, and treating diseases in broiler chickens and providing guidance on best practices to maintain animal welfare. Additionally, they assist in optimizing nutrition and proper environmental management, which are vital for enhancing production efficiency. The quality of interaction between farmers and veterinarians influences the implementation of animal health practices, disease management, and the utilization of modern technology in farming. Through effective collaboration, farmers can manage and reduce disease risks, improve production efficiency, and adopt the latest technologies recommended by veterinarians. This dynamic relationship impacts not only the health of broiler chickens but also the overall operational success of the farms. The operational success achieved through close collaboration supports the economic sustainability of the farming operations,

ensuring the production of healthy and high-quality broiler chickens, and creating a better and more efficient farming environment.

Broiler chickens are one of the key commodities in the livestock sector in Indonesia, significantly contributing to the fulfillment of the community's animal protein needs. With the increasing demand for broiler chicken meat, the challenges faced by farmers are becoming more complex, including health management and livestock maintenance. This is where the role of veterinarians becomes vital. Veterinarians not only function as health service providers but also as strategic partners who assist farmers in managing risks and increasing livestock productivity.

Broiler chicken farmers rely on the knowledge and skills of veterinarians to tackle various health challenges, such as disease prevention, diagnosis, and treatment. Diseases like Newcastle Disease, Infectious Bursal Disease (Gumboro), and Avian Influenza pose serious threats that require prompt and accurate handling. Additionally, optimal nutrition and environmental management also necessitate advice and interventions from veterinarians. On the other hand, veterinarians need a deep understanding of the field conditions and practical challenges faced by farmers to provide effective and relevant services. Therefore, synergy between the two parties is essential to achieve the common goal of producing healthy and high-quality broiler chickens.

This study aims to explore the dynamics of the relationship between farmers and veterinarians in the broiler chicken farming sector through a qualitative approach. This research will examine how interpersonal and professional relationships between farmers and veterinarians are formed, developed, and influence practices in the field. Through this case study, it is expected to gain in-depth insights into the factors affecting the interaction between the two parties, the challenges faced, and the strategies that can be applied to strengthen the cooperation between farmers and veterinarians. This study also aims to identify best practices that can be adopted to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of animal health services in this sector.

Using a qualitative approach, this research will delve into the experiences, perceptions, and views of farmers and veterinarians regarding their working relationship. This method will enable researchers to obtain a richer and more contextual understanding of the dynamics of this relationship and how it contributes to the success and sustainability of broiler chicken farming. Data will be collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and analysis of

relevant documents, which will then be analyzed to identify the main themes emerging from the interactions between farmers and veterinarians.

This research will also highlight the role of effective communication in building trust and collaboration between farmers and veterinarians. Good communication can enhance mutual understanding of each party's needs and priorities, as well as assist in better decision-making related to livestock health and management. Conversely, a lack of communication or miscommunication can lead to conflicts, misunderstandings, and a decline in the quality of animal health services. The results of this research are expected to provide significant contributions to the development of policies and programs that support the collaboration between farmers and veterinarians. By strengthening this relationship, it is hoped that improvements in animal welfare, farm productivity, and the sustainability of the broiler chicken farming industry in Indonesia can be achieved.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach to examine the dynamics of the relationship between farmers and veterinarians in the broiler chicken farming sector, aiming to provide a deep, contextual understanding of their experiences and interactions. The study adopts a case study design, focusing on specific farms and their interactions with veterinarians. Participants include actively involved broiler chicken farmers and experienced veterinarians. Using purposive sampling, the study aims to interview 10-15 farmers and 5-10 veterinarians to gather diverse perspectives. Data collection methods include in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews with farmers and veterinarians will explore their experiences, challenges, and perceptions. Observations at selected farms will provide contextual insights, and relevant documents will be analyzed to supplement the data. Data will be analyzed inductively, with themes and patterns identified through open and axial coding, followed by thematic analysis. Triangulation will ensure validity and reliability. Ethical considerations include obtaining ethical approval, informed consent, and maintaining confidentiality and anonymity. The findings will offer insights into the factors influencing the farmer-veterinarian relationship, challenges faced, and strategies for enhancing cooperation, contributing to improved animal health, farm productivity, and sustainability in the broiler chicken farming sector in Indonesia.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study successfully identified several key themes that reflect the dynamics of the relationship between farmers and veterinarians in the broiler chicken farming sector. Through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and document analysis, the following results were obtained:

Trust and Communication:

Trust and communication are pivotal in the relationship between farmers and veterinarians, particularly concerning livestock health and management. Farmers who place high trust in their veterinarians are more likely to follow health and management recommendations diligently. This trust, built on consistent positive experiences and transparent communication, fosters confidence in the veterinarians' expertise and advice. In turn, effective communication facilitates the exchange of crucial information, enabling veterinarians to tailor recommendations to the specific needs of the farm. By maintaining open channels of communication, both parties can engage in collaborative decision-making, ensuring that livestock health and management strategies are implemented effectively and sustainably. Thus, the combination of trust and communication forms the bedrock of a successful partnership, enhancing adherence to best practices and promoting optimal outcomes for livestock welfare.

Role of Education and Extension Services:

Education and extension services are crucial facets of veterinarians' roles in livestock management. Beyond providing healthcare, veterinarians act as educators, imparting essential knowledge and best practices to farmers. This educational role is instrumental in equipping farmers with the skills to maintain livestock health and prevent diseases effectively. Additionally, through training programs and extension services, veterinarians facilitate ongoing learning and support. These services include on-farm visits, workshops, and consultations tailored to address specific challenges faced by farmers. By engaging directly with farmers, veterinarians not only enhance the adoption of best management practices but also foster collaborative relationships aimed at optimizing livestock welfare and productivity. Thus, the combination of education and extension services plays a pivotal role in promoting sustainable agricultural practices and advancing livestock health management strategies.

Disease Management and Health Interventions:

Disease management and health interventions are critical aspects of veterinary care that significantly impact livestock productivity and welfare. Veterinarians play a crucial role in responding promptly and effectively to disease outbreaks such as Newcastle Disease, Infectious Bursal Disease (Gumboro), and Avian Influenza. Their timely interventions, based on accurate diagnosis and treatment protocols, are highly valued by farmers. By swiftly addressing these diseases, veterinarians help mitigate mortality rates and prevent the spread of infections among livestock populations. This proactive approach not only safeguards animal health but also maintains production continuity, which is vital for farmers' livelihoods.

Furthermore, effective disease management relies on strong collaboration between veterinarians and farmers. Through cooperative efforts, they can implement preventive measures, monitor disease trends, and swiftly implement containment strategies when outbreaks occur. This collaboration fosters mutual trust and understanding, enhancing the overall resilience of livestock operations against disease challenges. Ultimately, by working together, farmers and veterinarians can minimize the adverse impacts of disease outbreaks, ensuring sustainable and productive livestock management practices.

Practical Challenges in the Field:

Farmers encounter several practical challenges in the field that affect their ability to effectively manage livestock health and productivity. These challenges include limited access to essential medicines and vaccines, as well as gaps in technical knowledge. Veterinarians play a crucial role in overcoming these obstacles by offering practical solutions and tailored recommendations that are suitable for the specific conditions found on farms. The availability and accessibility of medicines and vaccines can be a significant hurdle in disease prevention and treatment. Veterinarians assist farmers by advising on alternative treatment options, helping to prioritize the use of available resources effectively. They also provide guidance on proper storage and administration of medicines to ensure their efficacy. Another prevalent challenge is the lack of technical knowledge among farmers, which can hinder the adoption of modern technologies and best practices in animal health management. Veterinarians bridge this knowledge gap through educational initiatives, training programs, and on-site consultations. By imparting practical skills

and knowledge, veterinarians empower farmers to make informed decisions and implement sustainable health management strategies.

Furthermore, resource limitations and the absence of external support systems further complicate efforts to improve animal health practices. Veterinarians collaborate with farmers to develop cost-effective solutions and advocate for enhanced support mechanisms from agricultural authorities and organizations. In summary, veterinarians play a pivotal role in addressing the practical challenges faced by farmers in livestock management. Their expertise, guidance, and advocacy contribute to overcoming barriers to effective disease prevention, treatment, and the adoption of advanced health practices in agricultural settings.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that the relationship between farmers and veterinarians in the broiler chicken farming sector is significantly influenced by factors such as trust, communication, education, and disease management. High trust and good communication enable a harmonious and productive relationship. Farmers who feel supported and valued by veterinarians tend to be more open to innovation and changes in their livestock maintenance practices. The role of education and extension services by veterinarians is crucial in enhancing farmers' capacity and knowledge. Continuous training programs and intensive extension services can help farmers adopt best practices in livestock health management, ultimately improving productivity and animal welfare.

Effective disease management and timely health interventions are crucial aspects in maintaining livestock health and productivity. Close cooperation between farmers and veterinarians in handling disease outbreaks shows that good synergy can reduce the negative impacts of diseases and enhance the operational success of farms. However, this study also reveals the practical challenges faced by farmers, such as limited access to medicines and vaccines, and a lack of technical knowledge. Support from veterinarians in overcoming these challenges is vital, but there also needs to be efforts from external parties such as the government and related institutions to provide better resources and support.

Overall, this study emphasizes the importance of building a strong and harmonious relationship between farmers and veterinarians. By strengthening communication, enhancing educational programs, and ensuring timely health interventions, this relationship can significantly contribute to the success and sustainability of the broiler chicken farming sector in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

This study underscores the vital importance of the relationship between farmers and veterinarians in the broiler chicken farming sector. Trust and open communication are essential for effective collaboration, with farmers more likely to follow health and management recommendations when they trust veterinarians. Good communication also facilitates better decision-making. Veterinarians play a dual role as healthcare providers and educators. Their training programs and extension services are crucial in equipping farmers with the knowledge and skills needed for effective livestock management and disease prevention. Timely and accurate interventions by veterinarians in handling diseases significantly reduce mortality rates and improve productivity. However, farmers face challenges such as limited access to medicines and vaccines and a lack of technical knowledge. Veterinarians help address these issues, but additional support from government agencies and related institutions is necessary. In conclusion, a strong, harmonious relationship between farmers and veterinarians is key to the success and sustainability of broiler chicken farming. Strengthening communication, enhancing educational programs, and ensuring timely health interventions can significantly improve animal welfare, farm productivity, and the overall sustainability of the sector. These insights provide valuable contributions towards developing policies and programs that support effective collaboration, benefiting the broader agricultural industry.

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