



Behaviour of Japanese Quails (*Coturnix japonica*) Kept on Different Bedding Materials

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Abstract

In caged Japanese Quails (*Coturnix japonica*), there are several welfare problems such as head injuries caused by aggressive pecking and head-banging as a consequence of escape responses. Objective of the study was to evaluate the behaviors of Japanese quails reared on different bedding materials. Seven months old quail birds were allocated for saw dust (SD), sand (SA), paddy husk (PH) and non bedding (NB/control) treatments arranged in a complete randomize design with 5 replicates. Each cage (3'x2') was provided with a feeder and a drinker and assigned with 5 birds. Undisturbed behaviour was observed for 7 consecutive days covering 3 sessions (morning, evening and night: 2hrs./session) using instantaneous scan sampling method at every fifteen minutes interval. Pretested ethogram was used to study 20 prominent behaviours. Four trained personals recorded the data on behaviour. Eating [ET], drinking [DR], standing [ST], walking [WK], preening while lying [PR/LY], preening while standing [PR/ST], sleeping[SL], dozing[DZ], wing flapping[WF], dust bathing[DB], litter eating[LE], the variety of vocalization including social Chicago calls[SCC], warming pip calls [WPC] and other[OTH] behaviours were significantly ($p < 0.05$) affected by the litter materials. Lying [LY], wing/leg stretching [WLS], flushing (a short rapid flight) [FLU], body swelling [BSW], contact pip calls[CPC] and other [OTH] behaviours were not affected by the litter materials. Utilized time budget (%) of prominent behaviours were; ST(53.43%), WK (17.57%), LY (10.37%), others behaviors (7.33%), PR/LY (2.03%) and ET (1.9%). Time budget on behaviours such as DR (0.5%), PR/ST(1.7%), WLS (0.02%), DB (0.17%), scratching floor(0.00%), SL (0.08%), DZ(1.64%), WF (0.07%), LE (0.08%), FLU (0.01%), WPC(0.07%), SCC (2.26%), CPC (0.00%), BSW (3.42%) were low. It is concluded that the type of litter material affect the behaviour of Japanese quail. Irrespective of the bedding material standing was the prominent behaviour. .

Keywords : Behaviour, bedding materials, quails, welfare

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