



## Body weight influences the behaviour of intensively reared broilers in deep litter system

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Understanding of the behaviour of broiler chicken at different physiological stages is of importance to maximize the profit and the welfare of the birds. Objective of the study was to appraise the behaviour of broilers at different weight categories (WTCs). Thirty two days old broilers of Hubbard strain (n=36) were randomly selected from 6 deep litter cages representing 6 WTCs; 1-1.250, 1.250-1.500, 1.500-1.750, 1.750-2.00, 2.00-2.250 and 2.250-2.500 kg. Birds were marked with 6 different colours for the identification of WTCs to represent one category by 6 birds. Feeds and water were given ad libitum. Seventeen behaviours; standing (ST), walking (WK), lying (LY), eating (ET), drinking (DR), head movement(HM), wing flapping (WF), scratching the floor (SF), bird interaction (BI), Jumping (JP), dust bathing (DB), body shaking (BS), vocalization (VO), running (RN), feather pecking (FP), flying (FL) and other (OT) were observed by scan sampling method, following an ethogram. Observations were made during 2 sessions; morning (900-1000 hrs) and afternoon (1300-1500 hrs) for 3 days. Each cage was visited 4 times/hr and the engaged behaviours were recorded. Higher body weights significantly reduced the behaviours such as WK, HM and RN while increasing LY. SD and BI were tend to be higher ( $p < 0.1$ ) with lower weight categories. Irrespective of the WTC, LY was the dominant behaviour. Other behaviours studied were not significantly altered due to the body weights. It is concluded that body weight affects certain behaviours of broiler chicken.