

Microbiological Assessment of Abattoir Effluent on Water Quality of River Katsina-ala, Nigeria

Vershima Jose Addy^{*1}, Terkimbi Jonathan Kabough²,
Haruna K. Mohammed³, Ibrahim Aliyu⁴

¹Department of Biological Sciences, P.M.B. 2373, University of Agriculture, Makurdi, Nigeria

²Federal Capital Territory Administration Abuja, Nigeria.

³Department of Farming System Research, Lake Chad Research Institute, Maiduguri, Nigeria

⁴Department of Science Laboratory Technology, Nassarawa State Polytechnic, Lafia, Nigeria

*E-mail address: joseaddy1@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT. Gram-negative bacteria isolated from the abattoir effluent on surface water of River Katsina-ala in rainy and dry seasons were *Escherichia coli*; *Klebsiella spp*; *Proteus vulgaris*; *Salmonella typhi* and Gram-positive bacterium isolated was *Streptococcus faecalis*. In rainy season, the lowest mean bacterial count was from *E.coli* (0.0067±0.031 CFU/ml) and highest mean bacterial count from *Salmonella typhi* (0.0262±0.0079 CFU/ml). In the dry season, lowest mean bacterial count was from *Proteus vulgaris* (0.0081± 0.0047 CFU/ml) and the highest from *Streptococcus faecalis* (0.0097± 0.05 CFU/ml). The presence of *Escherichia coli* indicates possible faecal contamination. The results revealed that bacterial load was within the accepted maximum limit by WHO (2004); nevertheless, the disease causing bacteria pose threat to human health when water from the river is consumed without treatment.

1. INTRODUCTION

Worldwide, water-borne diseases are among the leading cause of death of children under five years old and more people die from unsafe water annually than from all forms of violence, including war (WHO, 2004). Every year, around 1.8 million people die from diarrheal diseases, 88 percent of which are attributed to unsafe water supply or inadequate sanitation and hygiene (WHO, 2004b).

Improper disposal systems of wastes from abattoirs could lead to transmission of pathogens to humans and cause zoonotic diseases such as Coli Bacillosis, Salmonellosis, Brucellosis and Helminthes (Cadmus et al., 1999). Microorganisms commonly used as indicators of water quality include: Coliforms, faecal *Streptococci*, *Clostridium perfringens* and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (Bonde, 1977; Alonge 1991). The presence of faecal coliforms is considered as presumptive evidence of faecal pollution (Mara 1978). Seven pathogenic bacteria in Abattoir effluent were identified by Coker et al., (2001). These include *Staphylococcus sp.*, *Streptococcus sp.*, in Southern Nigeria.

Nigeria's Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA, 1991), outline national guidelines and standards for effluent, gaseous emission and hazardous waste management, these guidelines for effluent limitation have not been fully adhered to in the disposal of abattoir effluent in many areas in Nigeria including River Katsina-Ala, Benue state. Nigerians derive their water from surface water (springs/stream/rivers), hand dug wells, rain harvesting, pipe borne water, boreholes, and vendors (FGN, 2000). Due to lack of safe public water supply in Katsina-Ala Township, River Katsina-Ala has become a major source of water supply; and the effluent from Katsina-Ala abattoir may pollute the water of River Katsina-Ala.

Rainy season	0.0033	0.0035	0.0348	0.038	0.010	0.15	0.030±0.013	
Dry season	0	0	0.025	0.024	0.022	0.07	0.014±0.0130	
<i>Streptococcus faecalis</i>								400
Rainy season	0	0	0.0176	0.0038	0.0032	0.02	0.0049±0.0073	
Dry season	0	0	0.0013	0.0010	0.008	0.01	0.0021±0.0033	

KEY: dilution factor = 10⁵ (CFU/ml)

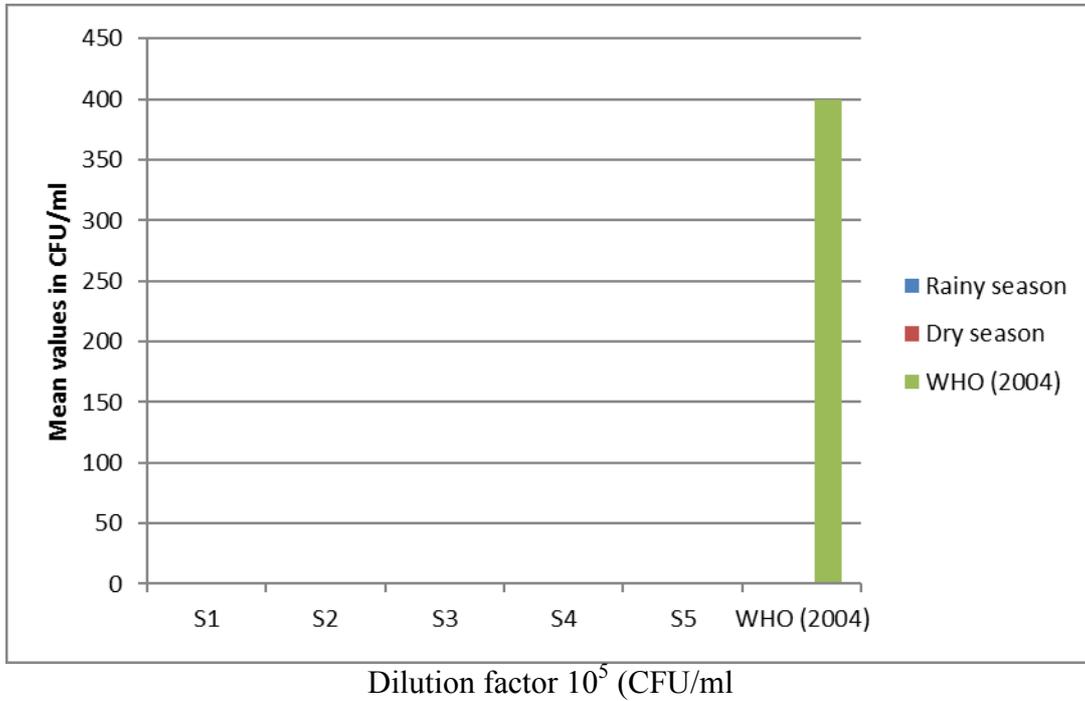


Figure 1: Seasonal variations in *Escherichia coli*

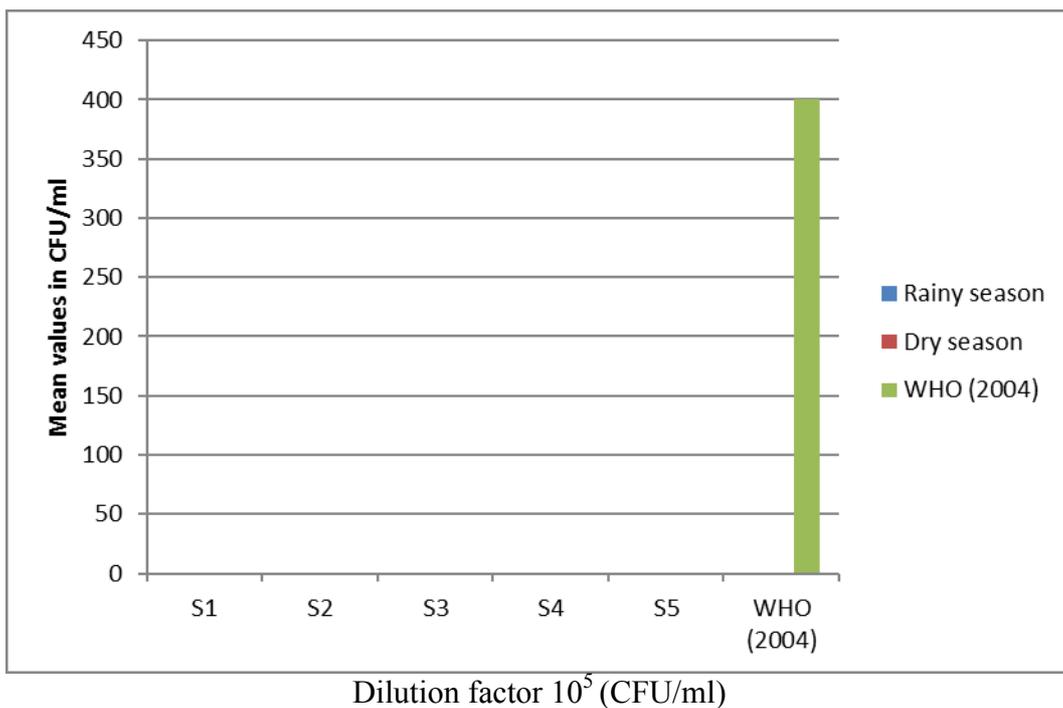


Figure 2: Seasonal variations in *Klebsiella spp*

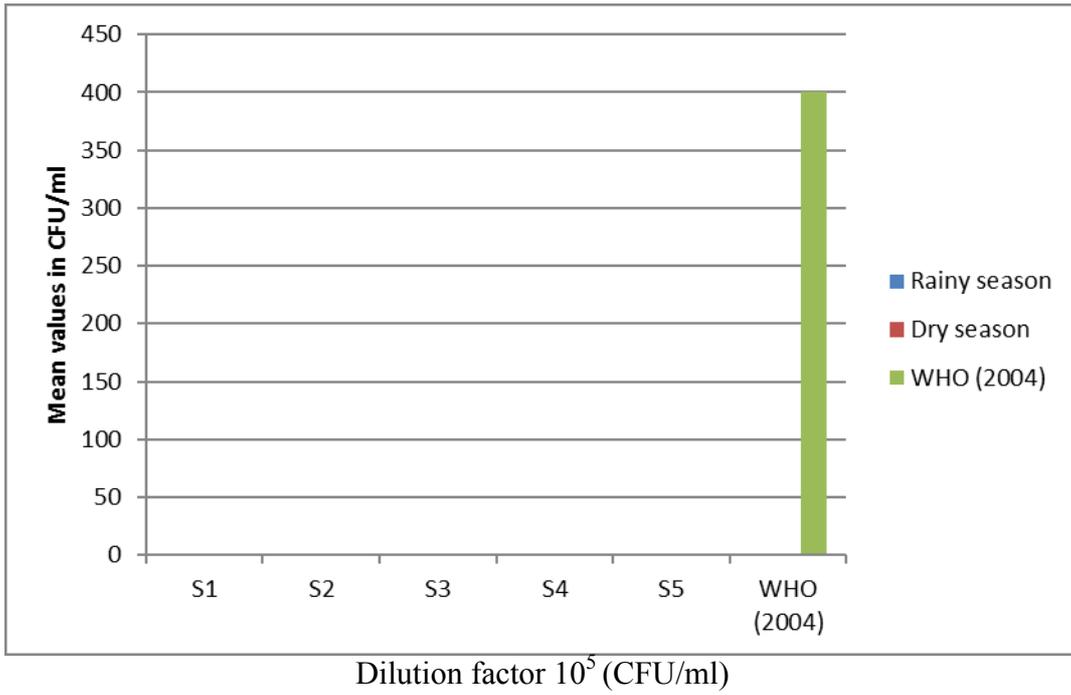


Figure 3: Seasonal variations in *Proteus vulgaris*

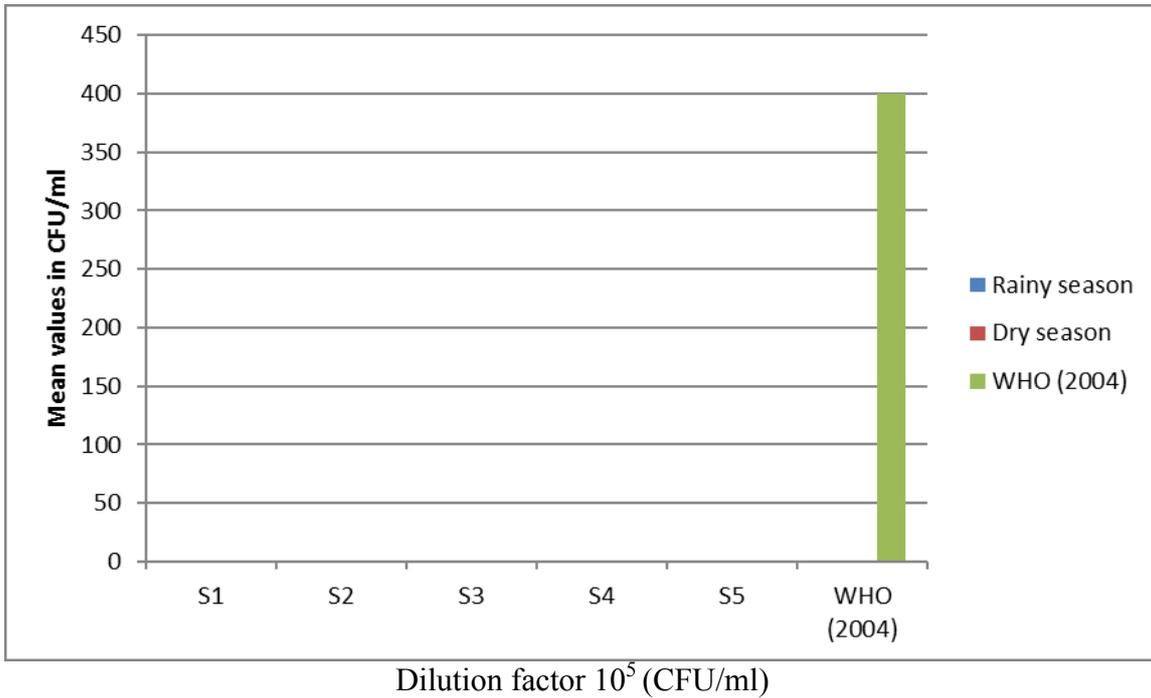


Figure 4: Seasonal variations in *Salmonella typhi*

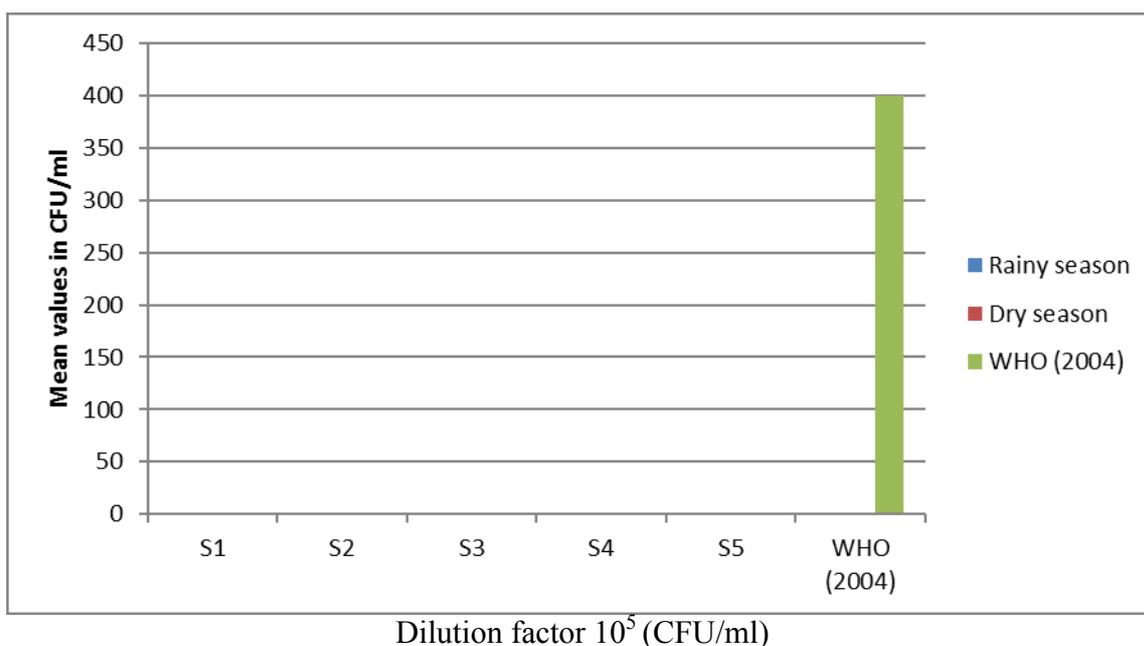


Figure 5: Seasonal variations in *Streptococcus faecalis*

Escherichia coli mean count at the five sample sites for both seasons is within the standard set by FME_{env} (2001) of 400 coliforms daily average CFU/ml. The coliform group is made up of well-defined biochemical and growth characteristics that are used to identify bacteria that are more or less related to fecal contamination; and *Escherichia coli* is specifically of faecal origin (Fujioka *et al.*, 1999). United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) recommended that the presence of *Escherichia coli* in the river serves as bacteria indicator of freshwater contamination (Hicks, 2000). *Escherichia coli* count at the upstream sites was low and high at the downstream sites in both seasons. Most strains *E. coli* are harmless, but some can cause serious diarrhea. Enterotoxigenic *Escherichia coli* (EHEC) and Enteropathogenic *Escherichia coli* (EPEC) are the main causes of childhood diarrhea (UNICEF, 2008).

Salmonella typhi mean counts at the five sites in rainy season were within the maximum limit of 400 CFU/ml by WHO (2004) with the highest mean value of 3.8×10^2 CFU/ml at site 4. It is interesting that no *Salmonella typhi* counts were recorded at site 1 and 2 in dry season before the abattoir site. *Salmonella typhi* mean values of 2.5×10^2 CFU/ml, 2.4×10^2 CFU/ml and 2.2×10^2 CFU/ml in site 3, site 4 and site 5 respectively in the dry season could be from the abattoir effluent. *Salmonella typhi* is an exclusively human pathogen and a leading cause of enteric fever worldwide. The *Salmonella* infection may spread from the intestines to the blood stream and then to other body sites and can cause death (Sarwar, 2015).

Klebsiella spp. can lead to wide range of disease states, notably pneumonia, urinary tract infection, septicemia, spondylitis, and soft tissue infection. *Klebsiella pneumoniae* and *Klebsiella oxytoca* are the two members of this genus responsible for most human infections. They are opportunistic pathogens found in the environment and in mammalian mucosal surfaces (Ashok and Amitabh 2010). *Klebsiella spp.* mean counts in both seasons were within the maximum limit of 400 CFU/ml by WHO (2004) with the highest of 0.0058 CFU/ml at site 3 and 0.0034 CFU/ml at site 3 in rainy and dry seasons respectively.

There were no bacteria mean counts in dry season at sites 1 and 2 before the abattoir site (site 3), notable presence of bacteria recorded in both seasons after the discharge of abattoir effluent. Effluent discharge from the abattoir may have contributed to the increase in bacterial load of the river. Surface run-off that conveys decomposed fauna and flora into the river may be a contributory factor.

Faecal streptococci and enterococci are also indicators of faecal pollution (APHA, 1999). The presence of *Streptococcus faecalis* at the two upstream sites was not feasible during the period of

study. It further suggests that *Streptococcus faecalis* originated from the abattoir and flew into the river; thus upsetting the bacterial load of the river. Epidemiological studies have shown that there is a linear correlation between microbial water quality and gastro-intestinal illnesses (Baron et al., 1982; Cabelli et al., 1982). This is confirmed by World Bank (2003) damages caused by increased illness or mortality due to ingestion or skin contact with contaminated water; give rise to direct health care costs and indirect opportunity costs. Furthermore, Oyedemi (2004) reports from medical experts to have associated some diseases with abattoir activities which include pneumonia, diarrhea, typhoid fever, asthma, wool sorter diseases, respiratory and chest diseases. The presence of *Salmonella typhi*, *Escherichia coli*, *Klebsiella pneumonia*, *Proteus vulgaris* and *Streptococcus faecalis* in the river clearly show microbial pollution of the river. These bacteria have the potentials of causing infections in humans when consumed without proper disinfection of water from river Katsina-ala. Contaminated water of the river from the effluent in the abattoir was used for washing beef. During rainy season, the high amount of *Salmonella typhi*, which is the causative agent of typhoid fever, indicates that consumption of water from the river without treatment may increase susceptibility to typhoid fever. The low bacterial count at the upstream sites when compared to the other sites may be due to reduced human activities, sedimentation and depuration (Ezeronye and Ubalua, 2005).

5. CONCLUSION

Bacterial contamination of the river from abattoir effluent poses health threats. The potential health consequences of microbial contamination are such that its control must always be of paramount importance and must never be compromised. The isolated bacteria cause diseases ranging from diarrhea to typhoid fever. The effluent discharge should be monitored and regulated to reduce the increase of contaminants into the river. Majority of the people do not have access to portable water and do collect water from the river. People that collect water or purchase water from water vendors downstream of the abattoir are at higher risk from contamination than people that collect water or purchase water upstream of the abattoir. Provision of retention ponds downstream of abattoirs for pre-treatment of abattoir waste before discharge into water bodies; monitoring of abattoir activities to enhance compliance with sanitary and hygienic requirements must never be compromised and adequate provision of portable water for the populace to avoid total dependence on untreated river water for meeting varying needs of the communities.

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