

## ASSESSMENT OF ENFORCEMENT AND IMPACTS OF TWO VETERINARY LEGISLATIONS IN OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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### SUMMARY

An assessment of the enforcement and impacts of the Animal Disease (Control) Decree 1988 and the Oyo State Meat Edict 1978 as amended in 1985 was carried out in Oyo State, Nigeria. Relevant records (1995-2004) were obtained from the headquarters of the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Oyo State. Questionnaires were administered as well as oral interviews through random sampling method among certain interest and occupational groups in the three major zones of Oyo State. The level of enforcement of the Animal Disease (Control) Decree 1988 was 26% while that of the Meat Edict was 25%. The overall level of enforcement of both laws was 25.5%. The low levels of enforcement of these laws were attributed to inadequate number of law enforcement and prosecuting officers at control posts and slaughter houses, high level of corruption among these officers, low and obsolete penalties attached to these laws, and relatively few Veterinary Surgeons and animal health officers in the state service. Also, within the study period, the slaughter figures for poultry and cattle increased remarkably. These were attributed to the enforcement of the ban on the importation of animals, hatching eggs and poultry into Nigeria. Constant review of Veterinary legislations, rejuvenation of the law enforcement agencies, arrest and prosecution of defaulters, among others were recommended to improve the situation.

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**KEY WORDS:** Veterinary Legislations, Enforcement, Impacts, Oyo State, Nigeria

### INTRODUCTION

The word law is defined as the just interference of a state in the interests and passions of humanity (Rubinstein, 1963). Veterinary Jurisprudence is the application of the laws and codes of ethics to regulate the relationships between the veterinarians and their clients, patients, colleagues and the society in general (Esuruoso, 1996). Within this broad concept of Veterinary Jurisprudence, the legal rights, powers, duties, privileges and liabilities and some protection for practicing veterinarians are defined. The term enforcement refers to all measures put in place to ensure the implementation of the provisions of legislation with the stipulated penalties to defaulters.

The enforcement of the provisions of the laws is entrusted to the police (FGN, 1996), the veterinary officers of government (OYSGN, 1978), veterinary surgeons in private practice (FGN,

1988) and concerned associations such as the Nigerian Veterinary Medical Association (NVMA) and the Nigerian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (NSPCA) (Ogundipe, 2001). Official veterinary services should have legal powers to exercise inspection over animals including domestic animals of all species and wild animals at least as far as they may carry diseases transmissible to domestic animals (Kouba, 2003). A legal responsibility is an obligation based on law for which a person may be called upon to give account to the society and for which failure may attract legal penalty (Ogundipe, 2001).

This study aimed at assessing the level of enforcement and impacts of the Animal Disease (Control) Decree 1988 and the State Meat Edict 1985 with its Amendment Edict 1985 in Oyo State.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Retrospective Studies

Records for a decade (1995 to 2004) were obtained on the registration of hatcheries and poultry farms, animal slaughter figures, and meat inspection from the headquarters of the Veterinary Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources (MANR), Oyo State, Nigeria. The records include those from Ibadan, Ogbomoso, Oyo, Iseyin, Okeho, Kisi, Igbetti, Igboho, Ago-Are, Sepeteri, Eruwa, and Igbo-Ora.

### Prospective Studies

Oyo State was divided into the following three zones; Ibadan zone, Ogbomoso and Oyo zone; and Oke Ogun zone of the State. This was done to ensure that every part of the state was adequately represented. Random sampling technique was used in each of the selected zones considering certain interest and occupational groups such as poultry farmers, veterinarians, the police, legal practitioners, cattle traders, butchers, control post officers, and veterinary vaccine dealers.

For each of the two veterinary legislations, a prepared questionnaire was administered on 150 respondents. In all, there were 300 respondents, 100 from each of the zones (Table I). They were randomly selected within the three zones among the interest and occupational groups. They were interviewed using the structured questions to obtain information on the enforcement of the provisions of the Animal Disease (Control)

Decree 1988 and the Oyo State Meat Edict, 1978 as amended in 1985. Records (1995–2004) obtained from the three zones of the state and the responses from the questionnaires were used to assess the level of enforcement and impacts of the two veterinary legislations. Reasons for the enforcement or otherwise of the two veterinary legislations, their impacts and implications in Oyo State were also obtained from the respondents during the interview.

## RESULTS

The level of enforcement of the Animal Disease (Control) Decree 1988 in Ibadan zone was 34% while it was 24% for Oyo and Ogbomoso Zone and 20% for Oke-Ogun Zone. Its overall level of enforcement in Oyo State was 26% (Table II). The level of enforcement of the registration of hatcheries and poultry houses was not only observed to be very low but also declining during the ten-year period (Table III).

The level of enforcement of the provisions of the Oyo State Meat Edict was found to be 35% in Ibadan Zone, 25% in Oyo and Ogbomoso Zone while that of Oke-Ogun was 15%. The overall level of enforcement in Oyo State was found to be 25% (Table IV). For the 10-year period, a total of 17,430,063 animals were slaughtered in Oyo State, 87.03% of this was poultry, 10.10%, cattle (Table V). Slaughter records during the study period showed that there was a high incidence of fetal wastage (Table VI).

TABLE I: The distribution of questionnaires among interest and occupational groups in the three Zones of Oyo State, Nigeria

Interest groups	Ibadan zone	Oyo and Ogbomoso zone	Oke-Ogun zone	Total no
Veterinary vaccines dealers	15	15	15	45
Poultry farmers	15	15	15	45
Veterinarians	15	15	15	45
The Police	15	15	15	45
Legal practitioners	10	10	10	30
Cattle traders	10	10	10	30
Butchers	10	10	10	30
Control post officers	10	10	10	30
Total	100	100	100	300

**TABLE II: Levels of enforcement of the provisions of the Animal Disease (Control) Decree 1988 in Oyo State, Nigeria**

S/N	Provisions	No interviewed in each zone	Ibadan zone	Oyo & Ogbomoso zone	Oke-Ogun zone
			percentage in favour of enforcement	percentage in favour of enforcement	percentage in favour of enforcement
1	The ban on the importation of animals, hatching eggs and poultry into Nigeria	50	62	40	36
2	The ban on the exportation of animals out of Nigeria	50	60	36	24
3	Veterinary quarantine Services	50	10	0	0
4	Restriction of the administration, sale and handling of Veterinary vaccines to only Veterinarians	50	14	10	10
5	Report of outbreaks of animal diseases	50	44	26	32
6	Disposal of diseased animals as directed by Veterinary Officers	50	20	20	16
7	Paying of Compensation to owners of animals, hide or skin or carcass destroyed in accordance to this decree	50	0	0	0
8	Licensing of trade animals	50	56	40	36
9	Issuance of Veterinary permit to trade animals owners before moving animals for the purpose of trade or commerce	50	60	40	40
10	Registration of poultry houses and hatcheries Shaving 250 birds and above.	50	30	26	24
11	Prosecution of defaulters	50	20	30	04
Percentage Total for each zone			376	268	220
Percentage Average for each zone		50	34.2	24.4	20.0
Percentage Average for the State			26.2		

TABLE III: Enforcement of the registration of hatcheries and poultry houses in Oyo State (1995-2004), Nigeria

Year	No. of Poultry registered			No. of Hatcheries registered		
	Renewal of Registration	New Registration	Total	Renewal of Registration	New Registration	Total
1995	30	14	44	20	5	25
1996	20	5	25	-	-	-
1997	20	3	23	5	-	5
1998	2	-	2	8	2	10
1999	19	-	19	-	-	-
2000	40	20	60	-	-	-
2001	3	-	3	-	-	-
2002	21	10	31	-	-	-
2003	12	2	14	-	-	-
2004	15	4	19	10	2	12

TABLE IV: Enforcement of the provisions of the Oyo State Meat Edict 1978 and its Amendment Edict 1985

S/N	Provisions	No interviewed in each zone	Ibadan Zone	Oyo & Ogbomosho Zone	Oke-Ogun Zone
			Percentage in favour of enforcement	percentage in favour of enforcement	percentage in favour of enforcement
1	Establishment of slaughter houses by local governments	50	60	40	30
2	Registration of slaughter houses	50	30	24	16
3	Maintenance of sanitary conditions of slaughter houses to the satisfaction of the Veterinary officers	50	20	16	06
4	Slaughtering of animals for public consumption only in registered slaughter houses	50	28	20	20
5	The prohibition of the use of insanitary premises for the slaughtering of animals by Veterinary officers	50	34	22	0
6	Meat inspection by Veterinary officers	50	64	42	30
7	Condemnation of unwholesome meat by Veterinary officers during meat inspection	50	50	32	20
8	Payment of compensation to concerned butchers by government	50	0	0	0
9	Prohibition of obstruction of Veterinary officers on duty	50	40	38	28
10	Prosecution of defaulters	50	26	14	0
Percentage Total for each Zone			35.2	24.8	15.0
Percentage Average for each Zone			35.2	24.8	15.0
Percentage Average for the State			25%		

**TABLE V: Animal slaughter figures in Oyo State (1995 – 2004)**

Year	Poultry	Sheep	Goats	Pigs	Cattle
1995	973,974	9,749	20,094	6,000	116,126
1996	872,759	7,662	23,666	2,567	112,084
1997	1,194,113	7,754	16,559	11,831	113,149
1998	618,227	14,405	26,133	2,827	119,805
1999	976,327	7,932	23,374	2,349	116,845
2000	1100,907	10,186	20,946	6,492	120,518
2001	2,857,721	7,494	26,349	11,618	122,219
2002	1,498,590	35,366	46,749	14,672	342,162
2003	2,795,101	24,129	28,250	3,678	300,590
2004	2,281,958	21,979	50,002	8,529	297,547
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,169,677</b>	<b>146,656</b>	<b>282,122</b>	<b>70,563</b>	<b>1,761,045</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>87.03</b>	<b>0.84</b>	<b>1.62</b>	<b>0.40</b>	<b>10.10</b>

**TABLE VI: Wastage due to the slaughtering of pregnant animals (1995 – 2004)**

Animal Species	Total No of Animal Slaughtered	Total No of Foetuses	Total No of fetuses as a percentage of total no of Animal Slaughtered
Cattle	1,761,045	14,288	0.8%
Sheep	146,656	42,663	29%
Goats	282,122	27,391	9.7%
Pigs	70,563	43,615	61.8%

## DISCUSSION

The promulgation of veterinary legislations in Nigeria dates back to October 28<sup>th</sup> 1917 when the Diseases of Animals Ordinance (now known as Animal Diseases (Control) Decree 1988) was enacted with the aim of backing veterinary efforts in preventing and controlling animal disease outbreaks in the country. Since then, several other laws have been promulgated to regulate various veterinary activities at the instance of veterinarians or other professional bodies (Ogundipe, 2000). The Animal Disease (Control) Decree 1988 of the Federal Republic of Nigeria was enacted February 24<sup>th</sup> 1988, adopting and repelling the provisions of the Diseases of Animal Act 1917 and 1962. The Animal Disease (Control) Decree 1988 comprise salient provisions relating to animal disease control and prevention with the objective of preventing the introduction and spread of infectious and contagious diseases amongst animals, hatcheries and poultries in Nigeria (FGN, 1988). The Oyo State Meat Edict

was enacted April 12<sup>th</sup>, 1978 while its amendment was enacted April 9<sup>th</sup>, 1985. This law provides for the establishment, registration and maintenance of slaughter houses, inspection of meat and other related matters (OYSGN, 1985).

The enforcement of the provisions of the Animal Disease (Control) Decree 1988 was low in each of the zones. The payment of compensation to owners of animals, hide or skin destroyed in accordance with this decree was never implemented in any of the three zones. The overall level of the enforcement of the Animal Disease (Control) Decree 1988 was found to be 26% (Table II). This is rather low but similar to the findings of Ogundipe (2001). Also, among the three zones, the level of enforcement of the Animal Disease (Control) Decree 1988 was lowest in Oke-Ogun, followed by that of Oyo and Ogbomoso and Ibadan. This could be attributed to the number of veterinary officers, animal health officers, law enforcement agencies and control post officers available in these zones among factors like the

presence of amenities and other necessary facilities. Despite the provision of the Animal Disease (Control) Decree 1988 on the payment of compensation to owners of animals, hide or skin or carcass destroyed in accordance to the law, there was no record of the enforcement of such provisions. The reasons put forward for the non-compensation was attributed to the non-release of funds from the appropriate quarters as a result of the absence of budgetary allocations for such reasons.

Contrary to the provisions of the Animal Disease (Control) Decree 1988, that "all veterinary vaccines shall be handled, sold and administered only by a veterinary surgeon or prescribed officer", there were indiscriminate handling, sales and administration of veterinary vaccines. The non-enforcement of this section of the law could be linked to the increased level of quackery being encountered in veterinary practice in Nigeria. Sections 18 and 19 of the Animal Disease (Control) Decree 1988 provide for the registration of hatcheries and poultry farms of up to 250 birds. In addition, the law stipulates a mandatory annual renewal of registration.

The partial or almost non-enforcement of the registration of hatcheries and poultry farms (Table III) is not only a threat to revenue generation but also a challenge to the prevention and control of avian infections in both poultry and human populations. Hence, there is the difficulty of ascertaining the number of poultry farms, their locations, and the population of domesticated birds. Also, the very low payable fee for the registration of hatcheries and poultry farms does not encourage enforcement. The situation is further worsened by the fact that the penalties and or fines attached these laws are very obsolete, ridiculous and lack the power to serve as deterrents to defaulters.

The most widely enforced veterinary law in a survey conducted by Ogundipe (2001) in Oyo State was the Meat Edict 1978, yet, its enforcement level in this study was found to be 25% (Table IV). Again, like the pattern of the enforcement of the Animal Disease (Control) Decree 1988, the Oyo State Meat Edict had the lowest enforcement level in the Oke-Ogun zone

(15%), followed by Oyo and Ogbomoso zone (25%), while that of Ibadan was 35%.

Reasons put forward by interviewed occupational and interest groups for the low enforcement levels were low penalties fixed for many provisions of this law, government's nonchalant attitude showed towards compensating owners of destroyed carcasses, absence of law enforcement agencies at the existing slaughter houses, lack of cooperation from the butchers and too few veterinary officers relative to the work available. This corresponds to the findings of Ogundipe (1983) that violence and animosity are hindrances to the enforcement of veterinary laws.

The police (FGN, 1996), state veterinary officers (OYSGN, 1978 and 1985), and private veterinarians (FGN, 1988) all have their roles to play in the enforcement these laws. However, illegal slaughtering of animals for public consumption gives no room for veterinary meat inspection and may therefore serve as a template for the transmission of meat-borne zoonotic diseases like tuberculosis, anthrax and brucellosis.

The obvious but fluctuating increase in the yearly slaughter figures for poultry between 1991 and 2004 (Table V), could be attributed to the enforcement of the ban on the importation of animals, hatching eggs and poultry into the country by the immediate past civilian administration as spelt out by the Animal Disease (Control) Decree 1988.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

There is the inevitable need to review the existing veterinary legislations in Nigeria in view of the obsolete fees attached as penalty to the violation of these laws. Also, the arrest and prosecution of defaulters by the law enforcement agencies is important. Government at all levels should provide facilities and enabling environment for the enforcement of veterinary laws.

The Veterinary Council of Nigeria (VCN), the Nigerian Veterinary Medical Association (NVMA), Private Veterinary Practitioners, the Police and the Judiciary must work together to improve on the level of enforcement of veterinary

legislations.

There is the need to employ more personnel into the Veterinary Departments of the State Ministries of Agriculture and Natural Resources to bring about an effective enforcement of veterinary legislations. Stakeholders in animal health and production may need to consider the setting up of a paramilitary body that would be saddled with the primary role of ensuring strict enforcement of Veterinary legislations and the non-politicized arrest and appropriate prosecution of defaulters.

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