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Sociodemograhic Characteristics of Dog Breeders in Some Selected States in Southwestern Nigeria

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SUMMARY

Dog breeding is a young growing business in which certain sociodemographic characteristics of the people has a far long reaching influence on breeding and the choice of dog to be bred. Information was obtained by structured questionnaire issued to the breeders; one hundred and twenty-five questionnaires were adequately filled out of two hundred issued out, and was analysed using simple descriptive statistics. Dog breeding is neither dependent on age, sex, nor educational status, to be a dog breeder, one only need to understand the rules of breeding. Our findings show that more males and youths within the age of 10 to 30 years are more involved in breeding. Majority of the breeders have tertiary education qualification which would motivate them to read and study the act of mating specific breeds of dogs for genetic improvement, this we believe should help in learning to acquire more knowledge about dog breeding for better profit.

Key words: Socio-demographic Characteristics, Dog Breeders, Western Nigerial cities, Oyo, Ogun, Lagos.

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, dog breeding is a young and fast growing business of which certain sociodemographic characteristics of the people involved have a long far reaching influence on their choice of breed. Dog breeding is the practice of mating selected dogs with the intent to maintain or produce specific qualities and characteristics. When dogs reproduce without such human intervention, their off-springs' characteristics are determined by natural selection. While "dog breeding" refers specifically to the artificial selection of dogs, in which dogs are intentionally bred by their owners (Seranne, Ann 1980). A person who intentionally mates dogs to produce puppies is referred to as a dog breeder. Dog breeders has been described as very gregarious people. When not taking their dogs to shows, field trials, agility events or other gatherings of man and beast, they are shuttling bitches and dogs backwards and forwards between kennels for mating. Irons (2003)

Breeding dogs has been a passion for people through many centuries. Part art, part science, and total devotion, breeding is both

exciting and challenging. Breeding relies on the science of genetics, so that breeder with knowledge of canine genetics, health, and the intended use for the dogs attempts to breed suitable dogs.

Breeders keep dogs for so many reasons which are targeted towards making profit and improving on breeds of a particular dog. Breeders intentionally feed dogs considered useful, while neglecting or euthanizing others, thereby establishing a relationship between humans and certain types of dogs over thousands of years. Over these millennia, domesticated dogs have developed into distinct types or groups such as livestock guardian dogs, hunting dogs and sighthounds. Artificial selection in dog breeding has influenced behaviour, shape, and size of dogs for the past 14, 000 years, (Akeya *et al.,* 2010).

To maintain these distinctions, humans have intentionally mated dogs with certain characteristics to encourage those characteristics in the offspring. Through this process, hundreds of dog breeds have been developed. Initially, the ownership of working and later purebred dogs, was a privilege of the wealthy. Nowadays, many people can afford to buy a dog. Some breeders chose to breed purebred dogs, while some prefer the birth of a litter of puppies to a dog registry, such as kennel club to record it in stud books such as those kept by the AKC (American Kennel Club). Such registries maintain records of dogs' lineage and are usually affiliated with kennel clubs (American Kennel club Staff, 1997). Maintaining correct data is important for purebred dog breeding. Access to records allows a breeder to analyze the pedigrees and anticipate traits and behaviours. Requirements for the breeding of registered purebreds vary between breeds, countries, kennel clubs and registries.

This paper looks at the demography of the breeders, the sex and age distribution of the breeder, different preference to breed of dogs kept and also the source of the dog.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
Study Location
The survey was conducted in three South-western states (Oyo, Lagos and Ogun states) in Nigeria. Oyo State covers approximately an area of 28,454 square kilometers and is ranked 14th by size, it is bound in the south by Ogun State, in the north by Kwara State, in the west it is partly bound by Ogun State and partly by the Republic of Benin, while in the East by Osun State.

Lagos state is located on the south-western part of Nigeria on the narrow coastal flood plain of Bight of Benin. Lagos State is bound in the North and East by Ogun State of Nigeria, in the West by the Republic of Benin, and in the South by the Atlantic Ocean. It has five administrative divisions of Ikeja, Badagry, Ikorodu, Lagos Island and Epe. Territorially, Lagos State encompasses an area of 358,862 hectares or 3,577sq.km.

Ogun State was created from the old Western State on February 3, 1976. It has Abeokuta as its capital and largest city. Located in south Western Nigeria, Ogun State covers 16,762 square kilometres. It borders Lagos State to the south, Oyo and Osun states to the North, Ondo State to the east and the Republic of Benin to the west.

Sample Size and Data Collection
To facilitate easy survey and retrieval of information, structured questionnaires were designed and administered to the respondents. Two hundred questionnaires were administered to dog breeders in different locality within the three states. One hundred and twenty-five questionnaires were adequately filled and retrieved back indicating 62.5% response from the breeders. The questionnaire was designed to obtain information on sociodemographic characteristics of personnel including gender, age, level of education, years of experience. Observations were made on the preferred breed of dogs kept by the breeders and sources of the dogs bred in the kennel.

RESULTS

The survey on the sociodemographic characteristics of dog breeders in Oyo, Lagos and Ogun states (Table 1) shows that there are more respondents from Oyo state (83) followed by Lagos state (29) and Ogun state (13), which has the least numbers of respondents. Based on the demography of these respondents, more males are into dog breeding compared to females. Oyo having 78.3% males and 21.7% female, Lagos 72.4% males and 27.6% females and in Ogun state 61.5% males and 38.5% female respectively. This is not in agreement with the findings of Degeling *et a l* (2012) who reported that there are more females dog owners than males. This may be due to the perception that dogs could be furious/aggressive and strong animals, very tedious to take care of and very playful to handle.

Respondents within the age bracket of 10 to 30 years are much more involved in dog breeding having 66.3%, 82.9% and 92.3% for Oyo, Lagos and Ogun states respectively. This reveals that youths are more involved in dog breeding than adults suggesting that they use dog breeding as a source of financial support. Following this are the breeders within age 31 to 50 years with records of 25.3%, 13.8% and 7.7% for the respective three states, this could be because these age brackets are mostly involved in the Nation's labour market and they are mostly family men and women. But very few numbers of breeders are greater than 50 years of age, Oyo and Lagos have record of 7% and 1% while Ogun state has no record of breeder older than 50 years of age. This could be because people at this age are weak and do not have enough energy to go through the stress dog breeding.

With the records shown on table 2, breeders with tertiary education are much more involved in dog breeding in all the three states showing 84.3% of breeders from Oyo state,69% of breeders from Lagos state and 92.3% of breeders from Ogun state. 10.8% of breeders from Oyo, 31% of breeders from Lagos and 7.7% of breeders from Ogun state has primary or secondary school education are also much involved than breeders without any educational qualification. Breeders without any educational qualification are only seen in Oyo state with 4.8%, These implies that, majority of dog breeders in the sampled states are educated and therefore would have more predisposed to acquire formal knowledge on the management and care for their dogs to give them a desired result. Records gathered also show that there are more breeders with 0 to 6 years' experience, 69.9%, 75.9%, 46.2% for Oyo, Lagos and Ogun states respectively. This is in accordance with the findings of Ishola *et al.* (2016) who also find the average experience of dog breeders to be 6 years. This is followed by breeders within 7 to 12 years of experience having 19.3%, 17.2%, 7.7% for Oyo, Lagos and Ogun states respectively. Very few numbers of the breeders has experiences above 12 years, this is only seen in Oyo and Ogun state with 7.2% and 46.2% respectively. This data shows that dog breeding is still in its infant stage in these three states.

Majority of kennel management or breeders in the three states of study employs 1 to 2 staff, this could be small as a result of the small kennel size and it could be as a result of inability to financially manage the staff. Few of them employs 3 to 4 staff which is small compared to the number of breeders in these states. 22.9%, 3.4% and 15.4% of staff in Oyo, Lagos and Ogun

Table 1: The Distribution of the Demographics of Respondents

State	No of respondents	Sex		Age(years) (%)		
		M(%)	F(%)	10-30	31-50	>50
Oyo	83	65(78.3)	18(21.7)	55(66.3)	21(25.3)	7(8.4)
Lagos	29	21(72.4)	8(27.6)	24(82.9)	4(13.8)	1(3.4)
Ogun	13	8(61.5)	5(38.5)	12(92.3)	1(7.7)	-

Table 2: Educational status with experience of breeder and number of staffs in kennel

State	No of Respondents	Educational status (%)			Experience of breeder(years) (%)			No of staffs (%)		
		Non	Pry/sec	Tertiary	0-6	7-12	>12	1-2	3-4	≥5
Oyo	83	4(4.8)	9(10.8)	70(84.3)	58(69.9)	16(19.3)	6(7.2)	43(51.8	19(22.9)	7(8.4)
Lagos	29	-	9(31.0)	20(69.0)	22(75.9)	5(17.2)	-	21(72.4)	1(3.4)	-
Ogun	13	-	1(7.7)	12(92.3)	6(46.2)	1(7.7)	6(46.2)	7(53.8)	2(15.4)	-

Table 3: Preference of country for dog importation

States	No of respondents	Within Nigeria (%)	South-Africa (%)	United kingdom(%)	U.S.A (%)	Germany (%)	Russia (%)	Australia (%)
Oyo	83	47(56.6)	10(12.0)	3(3.6)	5(6.0)	7(8.4)	4(4.8)	-
Lagos	29	20(69.0)	2(6.9)	1(3.4)	2(6.9)	-	-	1(3.4)
Ogun	13	7(53.8)	2(15.4)	-	1(7.7)	-	-	1(7.7)

states respectively. But very small number from Oyo state employs 5 or more staff, it was noted that those breeders with this high number of staff are from Companies security and Large Organisation companies who are capable of paying the large number of staff without any problem.

Survey from table 3 shows that most breeders in the studied areas, prefers to acquire their dogs within the country with 56.6% in Oyo, 69.0% in Lagos and 53.8% in Ogun state. The countries of preference for dog importation include South-Africa, United Kingdom, United States of America (USA), Germany, Russia and Australia. Breeders in Nigeria tend to have high preference for dogs from South-Africa and USA as their source of dog importation. While there are low numbers of dogs imported from Australia, Russia and United Kingdom. This denotes that breeders still do not mind importing their dogs from other countries just to have a pure breed line amongst the dogs in their kennel. The breeders use these dogs to get a desired trait which could earn them more profit on sales of puppies.

In conclusion, dog breeding being a fast growing business in Nigeria, has a promising future especially to the unemployed youths, it is therefore a potential tool for self-employment (Sansi,

1999). Though it is not dependent on age, sex, or educational status to be a dog breeder, but, more males and youths within the age of 10 to 30 years are more involved in breeding. Majority of the breeders are knowledgeable about the practice because most of them has tertiary education which would motivate them to read and study the act of mating specific breeds of dogs for genetic improvement also higher education had been reported to be among demographic factors found to be associated with small business success (Cooper *et al*., 1989; Kraus *et al*., 2008). These results can be an avenue/opportunity for veterinarians to conduct research and training for dog breeders in the aforementioned areas and other areas of concern in dog breeding such as the prevalent breeds in Nigeria, spatio-tempora distribution of dog breeders in Nigeria, kennel management e.t.c, similar work can be done in other states or geo-political zone to create a national record of breeders and the countries of importation.

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