

# Access to information on veterinary services among small ruminant farmers in Surulere Local Government Area, Oyo State

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**Abstract**— The research was carried out to investigate access to information on veterinary services among small ruminants' farmers in Surulere Local Government Area, of Oyo State. The data was collected using formal questionnaires from 93 respondents. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The result from the study shows that majority (62%) of the respondent with majority (81.7%) being male within the age range between 20-49 years. Results on educational level of the respondents show that more than half of the respondents had former education with about 34.4% having 11-15 years of experience in the business and 32.3% having 6-10 years of experience. None of the socio-characteristic of the respondent has significant effect on the access to information on veterinary services by the respondents. Also, majority (75.3%) gets information on veterinary services through phone calls, 67.7% through radio advertisement while 66.7% of them regularly have a personal contact and interaction with veterinary doctor in the area. The result further shows significant correlation ( $P < 0.05$ ) between the source of information and access to veterinary service. The study however reveals that the major constraints to small ruminant farmers in the study area include low level of literacy (78.5%) and inadequate extension service being provided in the area (67%). In researching how accessible is veterinary service to small ruminant farmers in Surulere Local Government of Oyo State, 69.9% of the farmers considered vaccination to be a frequently accessible service while 58.8% of them opined that deworming service is frequently available in the area while only 44.1% believed that castration service is frequently available 43.0% says it is occasionally available. Therefore, the results of this study proves that while majority of the respondents were in their active age they need to be exposed to more formal education and that there is need to increase the presence of extension services in the study area.

**Keywords**— Veterinary services, small ruminant, information.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Livestock related interventions are found to be a successful strategy for poverty alleviation all over the world and large percentage of rural population depends on livestock rearing to earn their rural. Approximately 600 million poor smallholders in the world keep nearly one billion heads of livestock and livestock contribute 40% percent of the global value of agricultural output

and support the livelihood and food security of almost a billion people. (FAO, 2009) livestock keeping is a livelihood option in rural Nigeria with small holders and landless farmers together control 75% of country's livestock resources. Since the livestock wealth of Nigeria is mostly distributed among the marginal and small landholders, any growth in the sector would be beneficial to the poor people of rural communities.

In the humid zone of Nigeria, small ruminant fit into the small holder production system, as they require low initial capital investment and low operational cost as reported by Pollot and Wilson (2009). Majority of rural owners of small ruminant are farmers involved in food and tree crops production, while most women involved in food processing and marketing (Rivera *et al.*, 2004). According to Oladele (2014) a large percentage of the rural dwellers satisfy their subsistence need through livestock production which involved the rearing and marketing of livestock. Nigeria small ruminants resources are estimated at 34, 453, 724 goats and 22, 092, 602 sheep (Ajala and Adesehinwa, 2008). Diseases and inadequate nutrition constitute serious constraints to small ruminant's production in African (Tadesse 2012). Good management practices in term of adequate nutrition, diseases prevention and control and breeding are however essential for improved small ruminant production. Although the productivity of small ruminants in Nigeria is low (Rivera *et al.*, 2004), there is ample opportunity for improvement. Such improvement can be achieved through extension education and training of small ruminants producers. However, such extension education and training can only be effective if the training needs of the small ruminants producers are properly identified and addressed. Programme is most often successful when they focus on clearly identify needs of the target group (Hams 2011).

Animal health technicians (AHTs) work the supervision of the state veterinarian and are well trained professional to constitute an integral part of the veterinary team to produce high quality animal health care and public education. They are responsible for restraining and handling animals (cattle, sheep, and goat) Collecting blood sample, tick identification, vaccination of animals and are involved in dipping programme for the control of ticks and tick borne diseases (veterinary and Para- veterinary Act of 2000). Veterinary extension makes use of adult learning and community development techniques to improve food safety and control animal diseases. Effective in-service

training aims at improving skill and change action, beliefs, and knowledge to promote better extension .and communication among veterinary staff. It is also essential for successful research project. Method developed for veterinary extension and communication provide a good model for the training programme itself are necessary to identify constrain and to ensure success.

Pests and diseases constitute major risk to livestock development in Nigeria as incidence of pests and diseases are common in the country's livestock system. Although, prevention is known to be better than cure, it is invariably impossible to out rightly prevent the farm animals from being infected with either pest or diseases. This premise thus calls for establishment of sound veterinary service where infected animal could be taken care of. This requirement has been a great challenge in the Nigeria's livestock management system. Apart from inadequate veterinary service in the country, current veterinary therapy in Nigeria is suffering from both scarcity and the high cost of drugs there by making it impossible to save the livestock industry as it were in the country. Although, the livestock herders may take to ethno-veterinary treatments of their animals, this becomes possible only when the symptoms are visible enough, and by then serious internal damages and impairments of the animals health might have taken place. This situation thus calls for government and nongovernment organization intervention for the development of veterinary services herders. The veterinary traditional medicine practices may still be of value in the animal health care, but should be subjected to scientific investigation for efficacy. Furthermore, where these veterinary services are available they hardly get to the livestock farmers in the rural area while bulk of the animals is been kept. Although various factors may be responsible for this inadequate access to veterinary information in service in the rural areas a closer study an investigation will help in accessing these factors as well as evaluating their effects

The study was carried out with the general objectives of assessing the access to information on veterinary services among small ruminants farmers in Surulere local government area of Oyo state. However, we specifically identified various challenges faced by small ruminants farmer, determined the level of accessibility to veterinary service among small ruminants farmers as well as identified major and remote constraints to access to veterinary service by the small ruminants farmers in the study area.

## II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out within Surulere Local government area of Oyo state using the population of all farmers involving in small ruminant farming in the study area. However the study targeted small ruminant farmers in the selected wards of Surulere Local government.

Data required for this study was collected from primary source through the use of structured questionnaires using a multi stage sampling method in which Surulere Local Government was randomly picked out of the thirty three local government areas in the state. From ten wards in the study area four were purposively selected based on their rural contribution and they include Gambari, Oko, Iwofin, and Iresaadu. In all selected wards, 100 questionnaires were administered in total in all the wards according to the proportion of ruminant farmers found there. However, only ninety-three were retrieved. All data generated were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section is presentation of the findings and result of the study. It shows the socio-economic demographic distribution of the respondents and association between variables of the study.

*Table 1: Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Respondents*

*This section highlights the socio-demographic characteristics of the sampled respondents.*

Variables	Frequency (n=93)	Percentage
Educational status		
non formal education	10	10.8
primary education	5	5.8
secondary education	25	26.9
tertiary education	53	57.0
How long have you be in Business		
less than 5 yrs	22	23.2
6-10yrs	30	32.3
11-15 yrs	32	34.4
above 15 yrs	9	9.7

**Source:** field survey 2017

Table 1 shows that majority (62%) of the respondents are male while 39.8% were female. This is in line with finding of Elzaki *et al.*, (2010), who reported that livestock farming is actually manage by the head of the household usually male and Grenada, (2000) which submitted that male are committed to agricultural farming than female because livestock farming demand

physical energy application especially in area of feeding, castrating, debeaking, calling vaccinating, other activities. The table also shows that about 87.1% of the respondents are within the age not more than 50 years old. This indicates population of the respondent in the study area

involving in livestock activities are within their active age and will be able to cope with the rigor of the work. The result further shows that the majority (60.2%) were married while 35.5% are single. This proves that these people are responsible as marriage is believed to attract responsibilities. Results on educational level of the respondents show that 57.0% had former education while 10.8% had non-formal education while 26.9%

attended secondary school while 5.8% attended primary school only. This result shows that the respondents has the ability in them to read and write hence will not find it difficult to access printed information valuable to their livestock business. The results further attests to the submission of Olajide *et al.*, (2014) who reported that more than three quarter of their respondents had formal education.

Table 2: Source of information in veterinary service in the study area

Source	Regularly	Occasionally	Never
Radio	63 (67.7)	20(21.5)	10(10.8)
Television	39(41.9)	44(49.3)	10(10.8)
Phone call	70(75.3)	13(19.4)	5(8.4)
Newspaper	33(35.5)	37(39.8)	23(24.9)
Audio visual	16(17.2)	51(54.8)	26(28.0)
Mass media	15(16.8)	51(54.8)	27(29.0)
Face to face	62(66.7)	29(31.2)	2(2.2)
Group contact	38(40.9)	48(51.6)	7(7.5)
Community adoption	38(40.9)	37(39.8)	18(19.4)
Internet	29(31.2)	24(25.8)	40(43.0)

Source: field survey 2017. (Percentage in parentheses)

Table shows the sources through which small ruminant fanners in Surulere Local Government of Oyo State gets information on different veterinary service that is available for them. The result shows that 75.3% of the farmers regularly get information on veterinary service through phone call while 19.4% and 8.4% occasionally or never get information on veterinary through phone respectively. This could be a call to follow farmer in another area within the Local Government or other area within the state or to a veterinary extension officer. This agrees with Oladele (2004) how reported that official calls is the prominent among the farmers in the rural areas in order to get benefiting extension information. Also, 67.7% of the respondents frequently

get information through radio advertisement, 21.5% occasionally, 10.8% never did. However, 66.7% of them regularly have a personal contact and interaction with veterinary doctors in the area while 31.2% of them occasionally visit veterinary doctor while only 2.2% never for once visit veterinary doctor. The table therefore shows that contacting other farmers or veterinary doctor through phone call is the major source or means through which small ruminant farmer access information on veterinary in the Local Government area. This proves there is good interaction among the farmers and that they have qualitative access to information through media as reported by Olajide *et al.*, (2014).

Table 3: Benefit derived from veterinary service by the respondents

Benefit	High	Moderate	Low	No
Free service and drug	50(53.8)	30(32.2)	7(7.50)	6(6.5)
Access to current information	42(45.2)	30(32.3)	15(16.1)	5(5.4)
Information on diseases	33(35.5)	45(48.4)	8(8.60)	7(7.5)
Information on drug	36(38.7)	46(49.5)	7(7.50)	4(4.3)
Information on vaccination	34(36.6)	46(49.5)	11(11.8)	2(2.2)
Information on recent management	33(35.5)	42(45.2)	17(18.2)	1(1.1)
Information on finance	27(29.0)	44(47.3)	20(21.5)	1(1.1)
Information on better health	34(36.6)	37(39.8)	21(20.6)	1(1.0)
Information on market	22(23.7)	46(49.5)	23(24.7)	2(2.2)
Reduction in disease	30(32.3)	41(44.1)	18(19.4)	4(4.3)
Increase profit	24(25.8)	39(41.9)	26(28.0)	4(4.3)
Increase in flock size	22(23.7)	40(43.0)	26(28.0)	5(5.4)

**Source:** field survey 2017. (Percentage in parentheses)

Table 3 shows a breakdown of benefits the farmers derive from veterinary services available within their reach in the area. From the result 53.8% of the farmers rated their benefit in terms of free service and drugs as being high, 32.3% considered their benefit to be moderate, 7.5% considers their benefit to be low while 6.5% of the farmers have benefits from information on neither free service nor free drugs.

In term of benefiting from accessing available current information, 45.2% of the famers rate their benefit to be high, 30% considered it to be moderate while 5.4%

of the farmers have not derive any benefit from current information available to small ruminant farmers in the study area. In general, the result shows that the respondents derive moderate benefits from most of the considered information available to the ruminant farmers in the study area. This is in line with the submission of Bellemain (2012) Who concluded that Veterinary Services are the key players in the domains of animal health and animal food safety and thus have a major role in responding to increasing social demands in these areas.

Table 4: Constraints to accessing veterinary services in the study area

Constraint	Major	Minor	Not a Constraint
Level of illiteracy	73(78.5)	18(19.4)	2(2.20)
Poor road network	54(58.1)	35(37.6)	4(4.30)
Poor internet service	46(49.5)	37(39.8)	10(10.8)
Inadequate power supply	53(57.0)	34(36.6)	6(6.50)
Lack of interest	46(49.5)	41(44.1)	6(6.50)
Inadequate extension officers	67(78.0)	19(20.4)	7(7.50)
Cost of veterinary service	55(59.1)	34(36.6)	4(4.30)
Negligence of farmer	52(55.9)	33(35.5)	8(8.60)
Poor breeding method	43(46.2)	42(45.2)	8(8.60)
Poor management	43(46.2)	37(39.8)	13(14.0)

Inadequate nutrition	49(53.7)	32(34.4)	9(9.7)
Inadequate capital	52(55.9)	32(34.4)	9(9.7)
Low income / profit	38(40.9)	37(39.8)	18(19.4)

**Source:** field survey 2017. (Percentage in parentheses)

The table shows the constraints experienced by small ruminant farmer in accessing information on veterinary services in Surulere Local Government area. The major constraint encountered by small ruminant farmers in the study area is attributed to level of illiteracy and this is reflected in the result. The result shows that 78.5% of the farmers agreed that their level of illiteracy is the

major constraint to accessing veterinary service follows by inadequate veterinary officers (78.0%) and cost of veterinary service (59.1%) respectively in the study area. This could be symptomatic of inadequate extension officers in the state as a whole. This agrees with the submission of Karodia (2013).

*Table 5: Accessibility of veterinary services to small ruminant farmers*

Information	Frequently	Occasionally	Never
Vaccination	65(69.9)	23(24.7)	5(5.40)
Castration	41(44.1)	40(43.0)	12(12.9)
Deworming	50(58.8)	38(40.9)	5(5.40)
Dehorning	39(31.9)	45(48.4)	9(9.70)
Dehoofing	35(37.6)	47(50.5)	11(11.8)
Tagging	27(29.0)	55(59.1)	11(11.8)
Caponisation	21(22.6)	62(66.7)	10(10.8)
Debeaking	30(32.3)	52(57.0)	10(10.8)
Ear notching	23(24.7)	54(58.1)	16(17.2)
Tattooing	31(33.3)	50(53.8)	12(12.9)
Skin branding	25(26.9)	52(55.9)	16(17.2)
Nutrition diet	40(43.0)	45(48.4)	8(8.60)

**Source:** field survey 2017. (Percentage in parentheses)

Table shows how accessible are veterinary services to small ruminant fanners in Surulere Local Government of Oyo State. Of the entire farmer contacted 69.9% of them considered vaccination to be the most frequently accessible service while deworming was reported to be

next frequently accessed service (58.8). However Caponisation (22.6) was shown as less frequently accessed service in the study area. This is close to Oladele (2004) who reported that most of the farmers consult veterinary for disease control issues.

Table 6: Chi-Square

Variable	X <sup>2</sup> value	P-value	Decisions
Sex	3.901	0.142	NS
Age	5.311	0.724	NS
Marital status	1.920	0.927	NS
Year of experience	4.775	0.573	NS

**Source:** field survey 2017. (Percentage in parentheses)

None of the variables considered significantly affect the access to service among the respondents in the study area. This indicated that age, gender or marital status does not aid nor hinder access to information on veterinary services among the respondents in the study

area. This is in line with the findings of Olajide *et al.*, (2014) who reported that educational status and family size have no significant relationship with access to information by the farmers.

Table 7: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) Analysis of source of information and access to information

Variable	R value	P- value	Decision
Source of information and Access to information on veterinary service	0.540	0.000	<b>S</b>

**Source:** field survey 2017

Table 7 reveal significant ( $r = 0.540$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) correlation between the source of information and access to information on veterinary service among the respondents. This implies that source of information affects the respondents' level of access to information on veterinary service. This is an agreement in the finding.

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study reveals that majority of the small ruminant farmer in the study area have adequate access to veterinary services. However, access to information on drug, diseases as well as vaccination through phone calls was prevalent among the respondents. Also, level of illiteracy, poor road network as well as inadequate extension officers pose major challenges to the small ruminant farmer in the study area. The study present radio, television, telephone and personal contact as major sources of information on veterinary services among the respondents in the study area.

It is however necessary to recommend that government as well as other stake holders should ensure increase presence of the veterinary service in the study area. This requires a re-examination of the government's current strategy for livestock service delivery and for overall development of this sector In addition to this the small ruminant farmers in the study area should be encouraged to increase their literacy level as this will enhance their access to useful veterinary information. Regular specialized seminars and workshop should be carried out to benefit the small ruminant farmers in the study area.

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