



Six Months Assessment of Foetal Loss in Sheep and Goats at Shendam Slaughtering Slab, Plateau State, Nigeria

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ARTICLE INFO

Article No.: 053121052

Type: Research

Accepted: 31/05/2021

Published: 31/07/2021

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Keywords: Foetal loss; goats; pregnancy; sheep; slaughtering; slaughtering slab

ABSTRACT

So many factors are militating against sheep and goats development in Nigeria ranging from disease incidence, poor nutrition, poor infrastructure, poor policy and poor management practices. Of the poor management practices, indiscriminate slaughtering stands to be a major challenge. Therefore, this study was designed to carry a Six months assessment of foetal loss in sheep and goats at Shendam slaughtering slab, plateau state, Nigeria. Shendam town was purposefully chosen for this study because it was the Headquarters of Plateau South Senatorial District which has more influx of people that undertook political activities and with so many federal and state establishment as well as controlling business activities in the zone. A daily visit was made to the Shendam slaughterer between 6:00am and 11:00am for the period of six months from June to December 2019 and the number of all sheep and goats slaughtered per day per month was recorded. Mean and percentage were used to analyze the data under three categories (males, dried females and pregnant females). The results showed that a total of 1441.00 (Mean: 205.86) and 2358.00 (mean: 336.86) sheep and goats were slaughtered respectively in the six months assessment. In regard to sheep, 51.83% were non pregnant females, 9.86% were pregnant and 38.31% were males; and in regard to goats, 66.42% were non pregnant females, 5.95% were pregnant and 27.63% were males. It may be concluded that 9.86% pregnant sheep and 5.95% pregnant goats were slaughtered monthly in this study area. Therefore, policy that prohibit indiscriminate slaughtering, and equipment veterinary services are recommended.

INTRODUCTION

Sheep and goats production is the commonness livestock production cut across the sovereignty of the Nigeria state due to wide adaptation and no religious taboo in rearing and consuming of sheep and goats products (milk and meat). Start-up cost and

management cost of sheep and goats is low, their houses can be constructed from locally available materials, quantity of feed consumed per head per day is low and most importantly resistant to local ailments (Kusiluka and Sudi, 2003). Sheep and goats provide bulk of animal protein consumed in Nigeria. Owing to the high population growth being witness is Nigeria more of

animal protein is required and in most cases lead to indiscriminate slaughtering of animals in the quest for healthy foods. As more animals are slaughtered particularly pregnant stock it consequently results to low herd replacement rates (Cadmus and Adesokan, 2010). Taiwo *et al.* (2006) reported that slaughtering of young and pregnant animals is routinely practice in some Nigeria abattoirs. A study conducted by Bokko (2011) showed that fats sheep and goats command higher prices in the markets hence; most low-income farmers harvest pregnant ones to generate needed cash. To determine the rate at which pregnant sheep and goats are indiscriminately slaughtered it becomes necessary to conduct this study which aimed at six months assessment of foetal loss in sheep and goats at Shendam Slaughtering slab, Plateau State, Nigeria.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Shendam town was purposefully chosen for this study because it was the Headquarters of Plateau South Senatorial District which has more influx of people that undertook political activities and with so many federal and state establishment as well as controlling business activities in the zone. Small ruminant constitute the dominant source of source of meat because of their lower price when compared to cattle, camel, horses, donkeys and pig which in production terms the small ruminants were the commonness. Camel, horse and donkeys were barely scanty or non-existence, while pigs have religion constraint where in most cases was not slaughtered in a public designated slaughter house to have proper records. The southern senatorial zone comprised of Shendam, Quan-Pan, Mikang, Langtang North, Langtang South and Wase Local Government

Areas. It is located on latitude 10° C N and longitude 8° C in the Northern Guinea Savanna zone of Nigeria (Shiru, 2018).

Collection of data

A daily visit was made to the Shendam slaughter between 6:00am and 11:00am for the period of six months from June to December 2019 and the number of all small ruminant slaughtered per day per month was recorded, from which number of males, dry females and pregnant females was determined. To ensure hitch free study, prior permission was sought through the livestock division of the Shendam LGA and the assistant of the staff working at the slaughtering slab was also sought. When each female was slaughtered, its uterus was opened to see if it is pregnant.

Analysis of data

Data generated was described using average mean and percentage.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the number of sheep and goats slaughtered from June to December, 2019. A total of 1441.00 (Mean: 205.86) sheep was slaughtered monthly. From this figure 724.00 (mean: 103.43) were non pregnant, 590.00 (Mean: 84.29) were males while 127.00 (mean: 18.14) were pregnant. A total of 2358.00 (mean: 336.86) goats were slaughtered monthly. From this figure 1576.00 (mean: 225.14) were non pregnant, 636.00 (Mean: 90.86) were males while 146.00 (mean: 20.86) were pregnant.

Table 1: Number of sheep and goats slaughtered from June to December, 2019

Parameter	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total	Average
Total sheep	235.00	335.00	161.00	119.00	101.00	130.00	360.00	1441.00	205.86
Female sheep	90.00	114.00	91.00	80.00	40.00	84.00	225.00	724.00	103.43
Pregnant sheep	25.00	20.00	14.00	15.00	12.00	16.00	25.00	127.00	18.14
Male sheep	120.00	201.00	56.00	24.00	49.00	30.00	110.00	590.00	84.29
Total goats	450.00	360.00	255.00	241.00	288.00	302.00	462.00	2358.00	336.86
Female goats	319.00	250.00	137.00	191.00	183.00	181.00	315.00	1576.00	225.14
Pregnant goats	30.00	21.00	8.00	10.00	23.00	19.00	35.00	146.00	20.86
Male goats	101.00	89.00	110.00	40.00	82.00	102.00	112.00	636.00	90.86

Table 2 shows the Percentages (%) of sheep and goats slaughtered from June to December, 2019. The percentage of non pregnant sheep slaughtered was 51.83%, 38.31% were males and 9.86% were pregnant

sheep. Pertaining to goats, 66.42% slaughtered were non pregnant, 27.63% were males and 5.95% were pregnant.

Table 2: Percentages (%) of sheep and goats slaughtered from June to December, 2019

Parameter	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Average
Female sheep	38.30	34.03	56.52	67.23	39.60	64.62	62.50	51.83
Pregnant sheep	10.64	5.97	8.70	12.61	11.88	12.31	6.94	9.86
Male sheep	51.06	60.00	34.78	20.17	48.51	23.08	30.56	38.31
Female goats	70.89	69.44	53.73	79.25	63.54	59.93	68.18	66.42
Pregnant goats	6.67	5.83	3.14	4.15	7.99	6.29	7.58	5.95
Male goats	22.44	24.72	43.14	16.60	28.47	33.77	24.24	27.63

DISCUSSION

The percentages of females (pregnant and non pregnant) and males slaughtered observed in both species in this study showed that more females are slaughtered than males in this study area. The higher percent of slaughtered females is unethical because in true breeding programme more females are stock with fewer males. It should be noted that females are potential mothers, whether they were pregnant or not as at the time of the study. This study supports the finding of Alhaji (2013) that more productive sheep and goats are lost through slaughtering.

Ardo *et al.* (2013) in their study reported that indiscriminate slaughtering of females is due to scarcity of feed during dry seasons which makes farmers to reduce the size of their flocks while Kusiluka and Sudi (2003) claimed that disease outbreak which most farmers cannot manage force them to dispose their stock. However, on the sport assessment indicated that some farmers are usually not aware of animal with pregnancy and such will dispose pregnant ones ignorantly.

CONCLUSION

In this study it was observed that 9.86% pregnant sheep and 5.95% pregnant goats were slaughtered monthly in this study area. Therefore, policy that prohibit indiscriminate slaughtering, and equipment veterinary services are recommended.

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