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**SURVEY ON CATTLE TRANSPORTATION AND WELFARE IN YELWA LIVESTOCK MARKET, SHENDAM LGA, PLATEAU STATE, NIGERIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The process of conveying animals from one place to another is multi-tasking and involves various personnel. The study was to determine the survey of cattle transportation in Yelwa livestock market, Shendam LGA Plateau state, Nigeria. Fifty-eight questionnaires were distributed and 55 responded where 20 respondents engage in transporting ranging from 10 -20(36.4%) cattle to the market. Of the 55, 21(32%) transported cattle by means of trekking to the market with least 9(16.4%) respondents by lorry and there was no significant ( $p>0.05$ ) difference among the distribution. In regards to problems face on transportation, injury had the highest respondents of 19(34.5%) follows by fatigue with 12(21.8%) and the result shows a significant ( $p<0.05$ ) difference. Of the 55 respondents 25(45.5%) transported only adults and those that transported both adults and young was the least with 13 (23.6%) and there was no significant ( $p>0.05$ ) difference among the distribution. Therefore, farmers should be properly educated on animal welfare and how to improve on the transportation of their animals to the market or slaughter house to avoid unnecessary injuries and fatigue to the animals*

**Keywords: Cattle, Transportation, Market, Welfare Survey**

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**INTRODUCTION**

Transportation is an important sector of livestock production and the process of conveying animals from one place to another is multi-tasking and involves various personnel (Aradom et al., 2012). It is a global practice that has existed for years as Livestock travel at least once in their life time for the purpose of feeding, breeding, in search of a market and the abattoir as well as animal show. Perhaps economic drivers such as good prices in another environment may equally be the reason for such journey (Dalmau et al., 2013). Unlike the United Kingdom which has a well-developed and advanced system of transporting animals, in developing countries like Nigeria, the transport system is not well developed and vehicle used are primarily designed for other purposes. Perhaps such vehicles contribute in inducing stress to the animal in-transit. These stress inducing factors are responsible for compromising animal health and welfare (Schwartzkop-Genswein, 2012). In an event of long-distance journey, the animals should be rested in between the journey which may involve unloading, feeding as well as reloading. This may either be once or several times depending on the distance of the journey and the governing legislation. The means and processes involved in transportation may however vary due to differences in technology, distance covered and road infrastructure. For instance, developing countries like Nigeria loads and unload animals manually. Equally, in Nigeria, the major reasons for transporting animals (ruminants) are: marketing, slaughter house and search for grazing land Miranda-de la Lama *at al.* (2012). The study was aim to determine the survey on cattle transportation and welfare in Yelwa Shendam livestock market

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

**Study Area:** The research was conducted in Yelwa livestock market in Shendam LGA of Plateau State. Yelwa town was purposively chosen because the market is strategically located and it is the biggest livestock market in the southern part of Plateau State where many come to buy and sale

**Methods of data collection:** Data were generated by administering fifty-eight questionnaires personally to the respondents and also engage them in oral discussion, questions were also interpreted for clarity and only fifty-five of the questionnaires were retrieved. The respondents were strictly the cattle owners and the middlemen

**Data analysis:** Data generated from the respondents were further summarized into table and were analyzed using percentages and Chi square

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Table 1 shows the number of cattle transported. The distribution of the number of cattle transported by respondents indicates varied scales of operation. A significant portion of respondents transported between 10 -20 (36.4%) making this the most common range follow by 20 – 30(29.0%) with least from those with 1 -10 (16.4%).

**Table 1: Responses on number of cattle transported**

No of cattle	Frequency	Percentages
1 – 10	09	16.4
10 – 20	20	36.4
20 - 30	16	29.0
30 above	10	18.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100</b>

This data shows that while many respondents are involved in mid-scale cattle transport, fewer engage in larger or smaller-scale operations. Overall, this distribution suggests that most respondents operate within a moderate range, balancing between smaller, more localized movements and larger, commercial-scale transport. It is a global practice that has existed for years as Livestock travel at least once in their life time for the purpose of feeding, breeding, in search of a market Ayo and Minka, (2006). Perhaps good prices in another environment may equally be the reason for transporting a good number of animals to the market Marahrens et al., (2011).

**Table 2: Responses on means used in cattle transportation**

Means of transport	Frequency	Percentages	P- Value	Df
By trekking	21	38.2	0.0858	3
By bus	10	18.2		
Parker van	15	27.2		
Lorry	09	16.4		
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100</b>		

Table 2 show the means of cattle transportation in Yelwa. It was revealed that among various means used, transport through trekking 21(38.2%) is the most common method used and parker van with 15 (27.2%) and least of the means used was by transporting by the used of lorry 9(16.4%). This suggests that trekking is still a prevalent and traditional way to transport cattle, likely due to its affordability and simplicity in rural or less-developed areas. The result show no significant ( $p>0.05$ ) difference among the distribution. Following the used of parker vans, indicating that small transport vehicles play a significant role in cattle transportation, potentially due to their accessibility and suitability for short- to medium-distance transport. The use of lorries indicating that they are useful for transporting larger numbers of cattle or over longer distances, they are less frequently used. Overall, the data suggests that trekking and small vehicles like parker vans are the dominant means of cattle transport, while buses and lorries are used less frequently but still play a role in the distribution of transport methods. In Nigeria animals are transported by road mostly Fulani pastoralist as reported by Ayo *et al.* (2006) Animals are transported to the south by road. The transport of cattle to the cattle market was found be in of shocking standards. Lorry surfaces were covered in water, urine and faeces. Animals are usually over- crowded in vehicles and are mishandled during loading and offloading. The means and processes involved in transportation may however vary due to differences in technology, distance covered and road infrastructure. For instance, cattle dealers in developing countries like Nigeria loads and unload animals manually Ayo *et al.* (2006)

Table 3 presents the major challenges face during cattle transportation. It was shown that the major challenges face during cattle transportation in the study area was injury 19 (34.5%) and fatigue with 12 (21.8%) least responses were the ones that had no challenges 4(7.3%) There was significant ( $p<0.05$ ) difference in the challenges face during transportation of cattle. Injuries of varying degree can occur during transporting cattle by fighting, slippery, accident, vehicle motion and running all through the

journey even on foot could cause a lot of problem to the animals and overloading which could leads to twisting of neck as reported by Fazia *at al*, (2003).

**Table 3: Responses on major challenge face during cattle transportation**

Problems face	Frequency	Percentages (%)	P- value	Df
Accident	05	9.1	0.0039	5
Fatigue	12	21.8		
Theft	09	16.4		
Non	04	7.3		
Injury	19	34.5		
Death	06	10.9		
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100</b>		

Fatigue was another common challenge reported by the respondents, long distance trekking without resting the animal can be responsible for fatigue, overloading as mentioned above can equally cause fatigue. Fazia *at al*, (2003) reported that a wide variety of hazards were identified for the different welfare consequences and transport stages. According to Cockram (2022) group stress, handling stress, heat stress, injuries, motion stress, prolonged hunger, prolonged thirst, respiratory disorders all attributes to transport challenges

**Table 4: Responses on age of cattle transported**

Age	Frequency	Percentages (%)	P- Value	Df
Adults	25	45.5	0.1305	2
Young	17	30.9		
Both	13	23.6		
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100</b>		

The age of cattle transported varied among respondents as indicated in table 4 with adult 25 (45.5%) being the most commonly transported. Young cattle 17 (30.9%) were transported. This suggests that adult cattle are typically moved for commercial purposes, such as sales or market transactions, as they are often more mature and suitable for such activities. The younger animals are also moved, likely for breeding purposes, growth to market size, or other specialized reasons. A smaller proportion, 13 (23.6%), reported transporting both adult and young cattle, which may point to mixed- transport practices where both types are moved together for convenience. This distribution shows that adult cattle are the most frequently moved, reflecting their commercial value, there was no significant ( $p > 0.05$ ) different among age distribution. The data suggests that cattle transport practices are diversified, catering to different needs depending on the age of the cattle. When animals are mixed together it can cause more problems to especially the younger ones. As reported by Broom, (2008) that mixing of different species, breeds, size, and age are commonly practiced in Nigeria and other African sub region, but in the UK, there is legislation in place preventing this. Such practices cause varying forms of injuries such as scratch, blemish, bruises, incidences of dark cutting lamb and death which is of great economic loss Minka and Ayo, (2008)

## CONCLUSION

It is obvious that transportation of cattle is associated with stress that could be detrimental to the health, welfare and performance of animal depending on how they are transported. Economic losses can also be experienced as a result and it will be hard to get rid of it completely. However, the study shows a number of cattle are being transported by trekking (foot) especially not too far from the market area though some prefer trekking despite the distance and also the used of parker van depending on the distance and number or nature of the animals (unhealthy). The research also shows that most cattle transported were the adult and of both sexes. Yelwa livestock market being the largest in the study area, the cattle were transported directly by the owners to the market before uploading to other location by the middlemen

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