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Demographic Characteristics of Companion Animals Presented to a Nigerian Veterinary Teaching Hospital: A 13-Year Retrospective Study (2006-2019)

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Abstract

Background

Up-to-date demographic data on companion-animal populations are essential for veterinary service planning, disease surveillance and client education, yet such data remain scarce in Nigeria and much of sub-Saharan Africa, where pet registration is not compulsory and statutory disease notification is limited. This study describes the demographic characteristics species, breed, sex, age, and naming patterns of companion animals presented to the University of Ibadan Veterinary Teaching Hospital (UI VTH), a referral center for South-Western Nigeria.

Results

Records of 6,102 companion-animal consultations at UI VTH between January 2006 and May 2019 were reviewed. Dogs accounted for 6,053 presentations (99.2%), followed by cats (25; 0.41%), non-human primates and Cuniculus-species animals (6 each; 0.098%), avian species (4; 0.066%), rabbits (2; 0.033%) and swine (1; 0.016%). Among dogs, the Alsatian (German Shepherd Dog) was the most frequently presented breed (1,810; 29.9%), followed by the Boerboel (960; 15.9%) and Rottweiler (934; 15.4%). Local (non-pedigree) cats predominated among feline presentations (13/25; 52.0%). Female dogs (3,333; 55.2% of records with sex recorded) outnumbered males (2,703; 44.8%), and female cats (17; 68.0%) similarly outnumbered males (8; 32.0%). Dogs aged 104 weeks (approximately 2 years) were most frequently presented (441 records), and the oldest dog recorded was 520 weeks (10 years); the oldest cat recorded was 624 weeks (12 years). "Jack" was the most common pet name (122 records), followed by "Bruno" (93) and "Puppy" (78).

Conclusions

This 13-year retrospective review confirms that dogs and large guarding breeds, particularly the Alsatian, dominate the companion-animal population presenting for veterinary care in South-Western Nigeria, with a preponderance of female animals and a concentration of presentations among dogs beyond early adulthood. These findings provide a baseline demographic profile that can inform veterinary service planning, targeted client education, and future longitudinal and health-status surveillance in the region.

Background

A pet or companion animal is generally defined as an animal kept primarily for companionship, entertainment or compassion rather than for work, food or research purposes [1]. Dogs and cats are the most popular companion animals worldwide, although rabbits, rodents, birds, reptiles, fish and other species are also widely kept [1]. Pet ownership is associated with a range of physical and emotional benefits, including facilitation of exercise and social interaction, and animal-assisted therapy is used to

achieve specific physical, social, cognitive and emotional goals in clinical populations [2–3]. People most commonly acquire pets for companionship, security or the aesthetic appeal of the animal [4], whereas lack of time, unsuitable housing and difficulty arranging care during travel are commonly cited reasons for not owning a pet [5]. Conversely, some ethicists and animal-rights advocates have raised concerns regarding the autonomy and welfare implications of companion-animal ownership [6].

Historically, pet keeping in the modern sense was largely restricted to the upper classes until the emergence of a thriving middle class in the mid-nineteenth century [1]. Between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries in Britain, pet keeping evolved from an aristocratic pursuit into a fixture of bourgeois urban culture, generating a substantial commercial trade in animals and accessories, and even organized pet theft for ransom [7–9]. The categorization of dogs by breed and the emergence of formal dog shows and kennel clubs in the nineteenth century further reflected the increasing social and economic value placed on companion animals [8].

Companion-animal populations and associated spending have grown substantially worldwide. In China, expenditure on pets rose from an estimated US$3.12 billion in 2010 to US$25 billion in 2018, with an estimated 755 million pets nationally, including 51 million dogs and 41 million cats [10–11]. Italy has been estimated to have over 45 million pets, including approximately 7 million dogs and 7.5 million cats [12]. In the United Kingdom, survey data indicate approximately 10.3 million cats and 10.5 million dogs are kept nationally [13]. In the United States, an estimated 78.2 million dogs and 86.4 million cats are kept as pets, with companion animals reported to outnumber children roughly four to one [14–16]. In Nigeria, dogs are kept for security, breeding, sport, hunting and, in some communities, as a source of meat [17], but the national dog population estimated at 3–5 million by the World Health Organization as far back as 1980 - has not been rigorously updated using standardized methods [18].

Many jurisdictions regulate pet ownership through breed, speciesor sizespecific ordinances, and companion animals are increasingly the subject of legal protections intended to safeguard their welfare, even as debate continues over the ethics and legal status of pet ownership [19–21]. Pet keeping also carries a measurable environmental cost: in the United States, dogs and cats have been estimated to consume approximately one-fifth of the dietary energy consumed by the human population and to contribute proportionately to the environmental impacts of animal production [22]. Illegal trade in wild animals kept as pets remains a further welfare and conservation concern globally [23].

Companion animals are broadly categorized as domesticated or wild-caught. A domesticated animal is one that has been tamed and selectively bred over a sufficiently long period to exhibit marked behavioral and morphological differences from its wild progenitors [24]; archaeological evidence suggests that dogs have been kept by humans for at least 12,000 years [25]. Wild-caught animals are also kept as pets in some settings despite welfare concerns and, in many jurisdictions, legal prohibition [23].

Understanding the demographic structure of a companion-animal population including species, breed, sex and age distribution is a critical first step in veterinary service planning, disease-risk reduction and the design of client-education and preventive care programmes[26–27]. Demographic data are routinely collected in several developed countries through national surveys conducted by veterinary and pet-industry organizations [14,27], and cross-sectional surveys, insurance databases, microchip registries and clinical records have all been used to characterize companion-animal populations [28–33]. Because a high proportion of owned pets in countries with developed veterinary sectors attend a veterinary practice at least occasionally, clinical records, including electronic health records where available, have been used as a practical proxy for describing owned companion-animal populations [34–38]. In Nigeria and much of sub-Saharan Africa, however, pet registration is not compulsory, statutory disease notification is limited, and demographic data on companion animals remain fragmented and rarely published [4,26]. The University of Ibadan Veterinary Teaching Hospital (UI VTH), established in December 1981, functions as a referral center for veterinary care, teaching and research across South-Western Nigeria, and its clinical register therefore offers a valuable, if previously under-analyzed, resource for describing the demographic profile of the veterinary-visiting companion animal population of the region [27].

Dogs' demographic and health status can change considerably with age in ways that parallel human ageing despite their markedly shorter life expectancy, and understanding these patterns has become an active area of companion-animal research internationally [39]. No comparable demographic description has previously been published for a West African veterinary-visiting companion-animal population. The present study therefore used 13 years of consultation records from the UI VTH to describe the species, breed, sex, age and naming characteristics of the companion-animal population presenting for veterinary care in South-Western Nigeria, to establish a baseline demographic profile that can be updated periodically to monitor future trends and inform veterinary service delivery.

Methods

Study area and setting

This retrospective cross-sectional study was conducted using clinical records held at the University of Ibadan Veterinary Teaching Hospital (UI VTH), Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. UI VTH was established in December 1981 following approval by the University's Development Committee and Senate, with a mandate to advance animal health through teaching, research and specialized referral veterinary services, and it serves as a major referral center for companion-animal, livestock and wildlife cases across South-Western Nigeria [27].

Data source and study population

The hospital's clinical register was used to identify all companion-animal consultations recorded between January 2006 and May 2019 (13 years). A total of 6,102 individual consultations were identified

and included in the analysis. For each record, the species, breed, sex, age and name of the animal, as routinely captured in the register at the point of presentation, were extracted. UI VTH functions as a referral clinic for the South-Western region of Nigeria, and dogs constituted the great majority of records available for the study period.

Data management

Data were transcribed into a Microsoft Excel (Microsoft Corporation, Redmond, WA, USA) database designed for this study. Freetext species and breed entries were cleaned to correct misspellings and non-standard terminology by mapping each entry to a standard nomenclature; for dog and cat breeds, standard breed names were taken from established kennel-club breed lists, with each non-standard entry mapped manually on first occurrence and matched automatically thereafter. Because many breeds were represented by only a small number of individuals, detailed breedlevel reporting was restricted to the most frequently recorded breeds within each species (up to ten, where available); remaining animals were classified only as purebred or crossbred. Age at presentation was converted to a single unit (weeks) to standardize comparison across records.

Statistical analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to characterize the demographic profile of the study population (species, breed, sex, age and name frequencies); percentages are expressed relative to the total number of records available for the relevant species or variable, as indicated in each table. All analyses were performed using R statistical software (R Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria). Because this study was primarily descriptive and exploratory, formal inferential testing was restricted to specific pre-specified comparisons: a permutation-based test implemented in the R 'coin' package was used to assess whether age at presentation (in weeks) differed significantly between species (dogs versus cats) and, separately, between breed groups within species.

Ethics statement

No animals were used, examined or sampled specifically for this study; all data were derived retrospectively from routine, de-identified clinical records generated during standard veterinary care at UI VTH between 2006 and 2019.

Results

Records of 6,102 companion-animal consultations at UI VTH between January 2006 and May 2019 were reviewed. Seven species categories were recorded in the clinical register. Species, breed, sex, age and name frequencies are described below and summarized in Tables 1–5 and Figs. 1–7.

Species distribution

Dogs (Canine) accounted for the overwhelming majority of presentations (6,053/6,102 records; 99.2%), followed at a considerable distance by cats (Feline; 25/6,102; 0.41%), non-human primates and Cuniculus species (6/6,102; 0.098% each), Avian species (4/6,102; 0.066%), Rabbit (2/6,102; 0.033%) and Swine (1/6,102; 0.016%) (Table 1; Fig. 1). The sum of species-specific frequencies (n = 6,097) differs marginally from the total number of consultations analyzed (n = 6,102), reflecting five records with incomplete species information in the source register.

Table 1
Species distribution of companion animals presented to UI VTH, January 2006-May 2019.

Species	Frequency	Percentage of records analyzed (n = 6,102)
Canine	6053	99.20%
Feline	25	0.41%
Primate	6	0.10%
Cuniculus	6	0.10%
Avian	4	0.07%
Rabbit	2	0.03%
Swine	1	0.02%

Figure 1. Word-cloud representation of species presented to UI VTH (relative frequency shown by font size).

Breed distribution

Canine breeds

Among the most frequently recorded dog breeds (Table 2a; Figs. 2, 3), the Alsatian (German Shepherd Dog) was most common (1,810 records; 29.9% of dogs), followed by the Boerboel (960; 15.9%), Rottweiler (934; 15.4%), Crossbred dogs (474; 7.8%), German Shepherd (461; 7.6%), Local breed (435; 7.2%), Caucasian Shepherd (310; 5.1%), Bulldog (250; 4.1%), Pit Bull Terrier (153; 2.5%) and Samoyed (76; 1.3%). In the source register, "Alsatian" and "German Shepherd" were recorded as separate breed entries by clinic staff despite conventionally referring to the same breed; both entries are reported here exactly as originally recorded, without merging, to preserve the integrity of the source data.

Table 2
a. Ten most frequently recorded dog breeds at UI VTH.

Breed	Frequency	Percentage of dogs (n = 6,053)
Alsatian (German Shepherd Dog)	1810	29.90%
Boerboel	960	15.86%
Rottweiler	934	15.43%
Crossbred	474	7.83%
German Shepherd	461	7.62%
Local breed	435	7.19%
Caucasian Shepherd	310	5.12%
Bulldog	250	4.13%
Pit Bull Terrier	153	2.53%
Samoyed	76	1.26%

Feline breeds

Local (non-pedigree) cats predominated among feline presentations (13/25; 52.0%), followed by cats of unknown breed (11/25; 44.0%) and one exotic-breed cat (1/25; 4.0%) (Table 2b).

Table 2
b. Cat breeds recorded at UI VTH.

Breed	Frequency	Percentage of cats (n = 25)
Local	13	52.00%
Unknown	11	44.00%
Exotic	1	4.00%

Primate species

Among the six non-human primates presented, the Monkey was the most frequent designation (3/6; 50.0%), followed by Chimpanzee, Baboon and one further individual recorded as "Red Peter" (1/6 each; 16.7% each) (Table 2c).

Table 2
c. Primate species/breed designations recorded at UI VTH.

Species/breed designation	Frequency	Percentage of primates (n = 6)
Monkey	3	50.00%
Chimpanzee	1	16.67%
Baboon	1	16.67%
Red Peter (as recorded)	1	16.67%

Cuniculus breeds

Among the six Cuniculus-species presentations, the majority (5/6; 83.3%) were recorded without a specific breed designation, and one (1/6; 16.7%) was recorded as Chinchilla (Table 2d).

Table 2
d. Cuniculus-species breed designations recorded at UI VTH.

Breed	Frequency	Percentage of Cuniculus records (n = 6)
Not specified	5	83.33%
Chinchilla	1	16.67%

Avian breeds

Of the four avian presentations, three (75.0%) were recorded as African Parrot and one (25.0%) as Northern Ostrich, an approximate 3:1 ratio (Table 2e).

Table 2
e. Avian breed designations recorded at UI VTH.

Breed	Frequency	Percentage of avian records (n = 4)
African Parrot	3	75.00%
Northern Ostrich	1	25.00%

Sex distribution

Among dogs, female animals outnumbered males (3,333/6,036 recorded; 55.2% female versus 44.8% male). A similar pattern was observed in cats (17/25; 68.0% female versus 32.0% male). Sex distribution was equal among primates (3/6 each) and among Cuniculus-species animals (3/6 each, recorded under "Rabbit" in the sex field of the register - see footnote to Table 3), while all four avian presentations were recorded as female (Table 3; Fig. 4). Note: the species label used for the sex field of six animals in the source register ("Rabbit") does not match the species-level frequency recorded for "Rabbit" in Table 1 (n = 2); this total instead corresponds numerically to the six "Cuniculus" records reported in Tables 1, 2d

and 4c, and the discrepancy - present in the original clinical register - is reported here transparently rather than resolved retrospectively.

Table 3
Sex distribution of companion animals presented to UI VTH, by species.

Species	Female	Male	% Female	% Male
Canine	3333	2703	55.22%	44.78%
Feline	17	8	68.00%	32.00%
Primate	3	3	50.00%	50.00%
Cuniculus (recorded as "Rabbit" in sex field)	3	3	50.00%	50.00%
Avian	4	0	100.00%	0.00%

Figure 4. Sex distribution of dogs presented to UI VTH.

Age distribution

Canine age

Dogs aged 104 weeks (approximately 2 years) were most frequently presented (441 records), followed by dogs aged 156 weeks (approximately 3 years; 236 records) and 208 weeks (approximately 4 years; 135 records) (Table 4a; Fig. 5). All ten of the most frequently recorded ages at presentation were 130 weeks (2.5 years) or older; no age category under 2.5 years appeared among the ten most common ages. The oldest dogs presented were 520 weeks (10 years) of age.

Table 4
a. Ten most frequently recorded ages (in weeks) among dogs presented to UI VTH.

Age (weeks)	Approx. age (years)	Frequency	Percentage of the ten most common ages (n = 1,182)
104	2.0	441	37.31%
156	3.0	236	19.97%
208	4.0	135	11.42%
130	2.5	91	7.70%
260	5.0	84	7.11%
312	6.0	65	5.50%
364	7.0	48	4.06%
416	8.0	32	2.71%
182	3.5	28	2.37%
520	10.0	22	1.86%

Feline age

Among cats, age was not recorded for 6 of 25 animals. Among cats with a recorded age, 52 weeks (1 year) was most frequent (4 records); the oldest cat presented was 624 weeks (12 years) and the youngest was 1 week (Table 4b).

Table 4
b. Age distribution (in weeks) among cats presented to UI VTH.

Age (weeks)	Frequency
Unknown	6
52	4
78	2
26	2
624	1
48	1
44	1
22	1
13	1
8	1
5	1
3	1
2	1
1	1

Primate, Cuniculus and avian age

Age was not recorded for the majority of primates (3/6); among those with recorded age, the oldest was 156 weeks. Among Cuniculus-species animals, recorded ages ranged from 11 to 130 weeks. Among avian presentations, age was unrecorded for 2/4 animals; the remaining two were 104 weeks and 17 weeks of age (Table 4c).

Table 4
c. Age distribution (in weeks) among primate, Cuniculus and avian presentations at UI VTH.

Species	Age (weeks)	Frequency
Primate	Unknown	3
Primate	156	1
Primate	39	1
Primate	15	1
Cuniculus	130	1
Cuniculus	35	1
Cuniculus	30	1
Cuniculus	26	1
Cuniculus	22	1
Cuniculus	11	1
Avian	Unknown	2
Avian	104	1
Avian	17	1

Name frequency

"Jack" was the most frequently recorded pet name (122 records), followed by "Bruno" (93), "Puppy" (78), "Smart" (73), "Terry" (66), "Max" (64), "Lucky" (59), "Bella" (59), "Princess" (57) and "Captain" (54) (Table 5; Figs. 6, 7).

Table 5
Ten most frequently recorded pet names at UI VTH.

Name	Frequency	Percentage of the ten most common names (n = 725)
Jack	122	16.83%
Bruno	93	12.83%
Puppy	78	10.76%
Smart	73	10.07%
Terry	66	9.10%
Max	64	8.83%
Lucky	59	8.14%
Bella	59	8.14%
Princess	57	7.86%
Captain	54	7.45%

Discussion

Up-to-date demographic data on companion-animal populations are important for identifying populations at risk, informing veterinary service planning and interpreting future epidemiological and public-health surveillance [26–27]. In the present 13-year retrospective review of UI VTH records, we identified marked differences across species, breed, sex and age categories among companion animals presenting for veterinary care in South-Western Nigeria.

Dogs accounted for 99.2% of all presentations, with cats a distant second at 0.41% - a far greater disparity than is typically reported in countries with more developed companion-animal sectors, where cat ownership approaches or exceeds dog ownership [13,16]. This pattern likely reflects a combination of cultural familiarity and the traditional use of dogs for security and, in parts of Nigeria, for hunting, sport and food [17], together with comparatively limited demand for cats as household pets; targeted community-based studies would be needed to disentangle the cultural, religious and environmental determinants underlying this disparity [4].

Among dogs, the predominance of the Alsatian (German Shepherd Dog), Boerboel and Rottweiler breeds is consistent with a strong local preference for large guarding breeds, reflecting the primary role of dogs as security animals in many Nigerian households [17]. That "Alsatian" and "German Shepherd" were recorded as separate entries in the clinical register, despite conventionally denoting the same breed, together with the sizeable proportion of dogs recorded only as "Local" or "Crossed" breed, mirrors the difficulty of breed ascertainment reported in other veterinary-record-based demographic studies, where

breed is typically recorded by non-specialist staff at the point of presentation [36–38]. Local (non-pedigree) cats predominated among feline presentations, and a substantial minority of cats were recorded with breed unknown, suggesting that owners of cats and other minor species in this population may be less engaged with formal breed classification than dog owners.

Female dogs and cats outnumbered males in this study, a pattern that could reflect breeding activity, differential presentation rates for reproductive or obstetric complaints, or a true sex imbalance in the underlying owned population; distinguishing between these explanations would require prospective data linking presenting complaint to sex and reproductive status. Where sex differences in health and longevity have been examined in dogs elsewhere, neuter status - rather than sex alone - has emerged as the principal determinant of both survival and cause of death, with neutered animals living longer but shifting cause of death toward neoplastic and immune-mediated disease, while intact animals remain at greater risk of infectious and traumatic mortality [40]. Among reproductively intact dogs, males have been reported to live marginally longer than females, whereas among neutered dogs the reverse has been observed, although the overall effect of neuter status exceeds that of sex itself [41]. Neuter status was not captured in the UI VTH register and represents an important variable for future prospective data collection.

The three most frequently presented dog ages – 104, 156 and 208 weeks (approximately 2, 3 and 4 years) - were all beyond early adulthood, and no age category under 130 weeks (2.5 years) appeared among the ten most common ages at presentation. This pattern suggests that dogs in this population are more often brought to UI VTH once they are already unwell rather than for routine preventive care, consistent with reports elsewhere that owners often under-recognize the cost and welfare implications of preventive veterinary care and that older pets tend to receive less consistent medical attention [42–43]. Close physical proximity between pets and their owners is well documented to confer mutual physical and emotional benefits [44], which may partly explain owners' continued willingness to seek veterinary care for ageing pets. Ageing in dogs is accompanied by well-documented physiological and behavioral changes, including declines in sensorimotor and cognitive function, increases in morbidity and medication use, and changes in body condition, even in the absence of overt disease [45–49]. Even in dogs ageing "successfully", some decline in sensorimotor control, cognitive ability and behavior is expected, and it is the rate of such decline - rather than its mere presence - that distinguishes normal ageing from underlying pathology warranting veterinary assessment [50]. Because chronological age is a particularly consistent predictor of health status across breeds once senescence has begun [51–52], the concentration of presentations among older dogs in this dataset is consistent with age being a principal driver of veterinary attendance in this population, mirroring findings from clinic-based and cohort studies of canine ageing and health status conducted elsewhere [38–39].

Body size and breed are known to influence the timing of senescence and cause of death in dogs internationally, with larger breeds generally ageing and dying earlier than smaller breeds, although the age at which mortality begins to rise appears broadly similar across size classes [51,53–54]. Specific

morbidities, including certain neoplastic and immune-mediated conditions, have also been linked to breed [54], while other work has found comparatively little independent effect of breed on behavioral ageing once age itself is accounted for [52]. Because breed data in the present dataset were limited to the most common canine breeds and a binary purebred/crossbred classification for less common breeds, the present analysis could not formally test for breed-specific effects on age at presentation; this represents an important area for future study using individual-level clinical outcome data linked to breed. Individual variation in the pace of senescence is also influenced by genetic, environmental and social factors that parallel recognized drivers of human ageing and chronic disease, including diet, activity, stress and socio-economic circumstances [55–56]. Non-biological factors - including household smoking, obesity, owner engagement and the wider dog-owner relationship - have similarly been shown to influence canine health and longevity elsewhere [57–59], and owner-reported shared activity with dogs has been found to decline as dogs age, which is itself associated with reduced quality of life and reduced veterinary engagement [43,60]. The terms owners use to describe ageing, such as "senior", "geriatric", "overweight" and "obese", are applied inconsistently, complicating owner recognition of when veterinary assessment is warranted; regular veterinary assessment of all older dogs has therefore been recommended specifically to detect such changes early [61], and natural age-related behavioral and cognitive change can be difficult to distinguish reliably from pathological decline using owner report alone, reinforcing the value of structured veterinary assessment in older animals [62]. Demographic differences between purebred and mixed-breed owners have also been shown to confound apparent breed-behavior associations unless explicitly controlled for [63–64], underscoring the value of collecting owner- as well as animal-level demographic data in future surveillance efforts at UI VTH.

Analysis of pet-naming patterns, while less central to veterinary service planning, offers an accessible window into human-companion-animal relationships and cultural attitudes toward pets in this population. "Jack", "Bruno" and "Puppy" were the most common names recorded, broadly consistent with international observations that pet names frequently reflect close, family-like relationships between owners and their animals [65]. The benefits of the human-animal bond, including for pet-owning older adults, have been well described elsewhere [3,66–67].

This study has several limitations inherent to retrospective clinical-register data. First, the register captures only animals brought for veterinary attention and therefore cannot be assumed to represent the wider owned companion-animal population of South-Western Nigeria, which likely includes many animals that never attend a veterinary facility. Second, breed, age and, in a minority of cases, sex were incompletely or inconsistently recorded, and the species labels "Rabbit" and "Cuniculus" appear to have been used inconsistently by clinic staff over the 13-year study period; where such inconsistencies were identified, they are reported transparently in the relevant tables rather than resolved retrospectively, to avoid introducing unverifiable assumptions into the original clinical data. Third, no information on presenting complaint, diagnosis, outcome or neuter status was captured in the register, precluding formal health-status or survival analysis of the kind conducted using more detailed electronic health records elsewhere [36–38]; this represents a priority for future prospective data collection at UI VTH.

Finally, as a single-centre referral hospital, UI VTH may not be representative of primary-care veterinary attendance patterns across the wider region, and comparison with community-level and multi-centre data, as increasingly available in other countries, would strengthen future surveillance [26,68].

Conclusions

This 13-year retrospective review of clinical records provides one of the first systematically described demographic profiles of companion animals presenting for veterinary care in South-Western Nigeria. Dogs, and large guarding breeds such as the Alsatian, Boerboel and Rottweiler in particular, dominated presentations; female animals outnumbered males among both dogs and cats; and dogs beyond early adulthood were disproportionately represented among clinic attendees, consistent with age being an important driver of veterinary attendance in this population, as reported in canine health-status and ageing literature elsewhere [39]. These findings provide a practical baseline against which future demographic and health-status trends at UI VTH can be monitored, and they highlight the value of routine, standardized data capture - including breed nomenclature, sex, neuter status and presenting complaint - to support client education, targeted preventive-care programmes and companion-animal welfare policy in Nigeria [69]. Furthermore, a follow-up study can be conducted on the available register and other teaching hospitals in the south-west of Nigeria for a comprehensive review of the demography of pets in the Nation.

Declarations

Consent for publication

Not applicable. No identifiable client or patient data are presented; all records were anonymized before analysis.

Conflict of interests

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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Author Contribution

1. S.S., O.J., and S.O. T.O. wrote the manuscript text2. T.F., T.R., and P.O., T. R. edited and did the formal analysis3. A.O., P.O., and T.A. performed data curation4. O.J. supervised the work5. 1-4. All authors reviewed the manuscript.

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Data Availability

All data supporting the findings of this study are available within the paper and its Supplementary Information which is also in the references used for the manuscript where information were sourced.

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Figures

Figure 1

Word-cloud representation of species presented to UI VTH (relative frequency shown by font size).

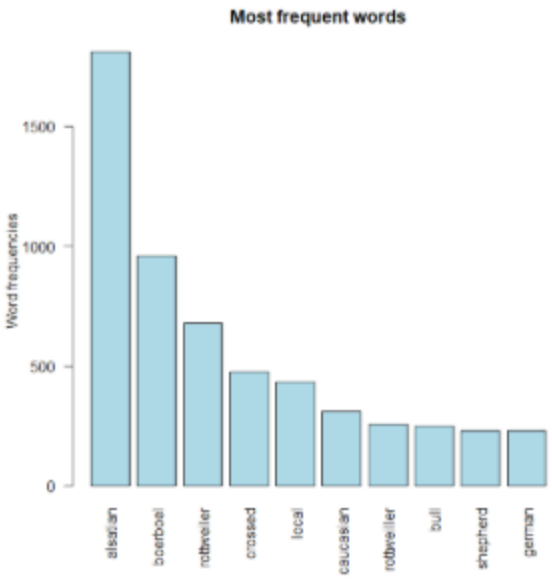


Figure 2

Frequency distribution of the ten most common dog breeds presented to UI VTH.



Figure 3

Word-cloud representation of dog breeds presented to UI VTH.

Image not available with this version

Figure 4

Sex distribution of dogs presented to UI VTH.



Figure 5

Word-cloud representation of dog age (in weeks) at presentation to UI VTH.

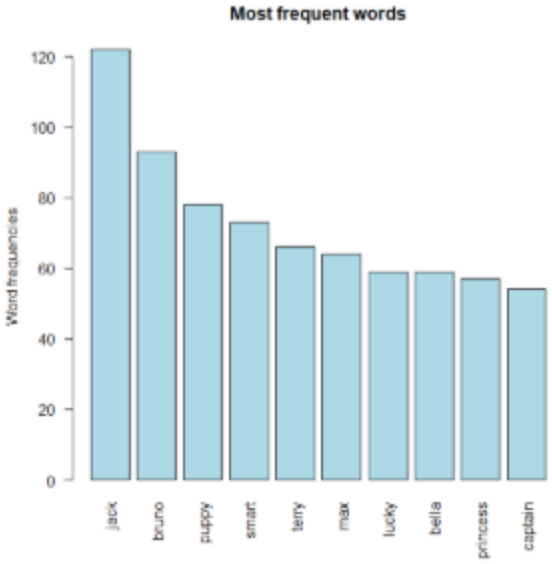


Figure 6

Frequency distribution of the ten most common pet names presented to UI VTH.



Figure 7

Word-cloud representation of pet names presented to UI VTH.