



## Animal Welfare: Wrong Approaches and Mistreatment of some Affected and Diseased Animals: Cases Reports

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### Abstract

The objectives of this work were to draw attention to the different wrong ways performed by animals' owners to treat their animals unprofessionally and to their impacts on animals' health, performance, life and welfare. Some cases were brought to the Teaching Veterinary Hospital (TVH), College of Veterinary Medicine, and University of Bahri, after being wrongly diagnosed and traditionally managed by their owners, they were documented and pictures for each case were taken. The improper attempts to treat diseased animals resulted in the prolongation of their bad conditions they are suffering from, continuous pain, restlessness, off food, loss of activity and function. The delay in delivering diseased and affected animals to veterinary hospitals or clinics, to receive the appropriate treatment in the right time, would turn simple cases to complicated ones. Misdiagnosis and mistreatment of such cases may result in organs amputations, loss of functions or death of dams or fetuses in cases of dystocias. Consequently animals' productive and reproductive performance are adversely affected or completely lost and all these may end up in tremendous economical losses. It is concluded that curing of animals, preventing them from wrong interventions and prolongation of pain are of animals' ethical and welfare requirements. All these represent part of the responsibilities of owners and veterinary professionals towards animals and the society. Animals' owners and labors should know the steps of the first aid procedures and the importance of the immediate presentation of animals to veterinary care units to secure them and preserve their wealth.

**Keywords:** Animal welfare, Health, Misdiagnosis, Mistreatment.

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### Introduction

The scientific study of animal welfare has developed rapidly during the last fifteen years. Animal welfare means how an animal is coping with the conditions in which it lives. An animal is in a good state of welfare if it is healthy, comfortable, and well

nourished, safe, able to express innate behavior, and if it is not suffering from unpleasant states such as pain, fear, and distress (Broom, 2006a). Good animal welfare requires disease prevention and veterinary treatment, appropriate shelter, management, nutrition, humane handling

and humane slaughter (OIE, 2010). Concerns of animal welfare historically focused on the use of animals for farm livestock production, transport, sale and slaughter (Litten *et al.*, 2005).

The legal relationships between owners and animals, in most countries, usually give the owners certain rights over their animals and the most obvious one is property. This allows owners to do many things to their animals including their destruction. However, in many countries owners' rights are constrained by laws that protect animals (Yeates, 2013). Recently, knowledge of animal functioning, particularly their behaviour and physiology, has increased rapidly and has been the subject of much media attention. This is a major reason for increased concern about the welfare of animals (Broom, 2006a).

Animals' health, is a part of their welfare, it can be qualified as good or poor and varies over a range. Health refers to body systems, including those in the brain, which combat pathogens, tissue damage, or physiological disorder (Broom, 2006a). This view is gaining in acceptance amongst scientists. Animals' health is one of the important conditions that should be considered when discussing their welfare. It is defined as an animal's state as regards its attempts to cope with pathology (Broom, 2006b) which finally reflects on their production and reproduction.

Generally, animals' owners may offer animal welfare when they are associated with human consumption, otherwise some of them do not believe in veterinary professionals and they believe in traditional ways of health problems management. Also they may have no idea, money or time to bring their animals to the clinics. Instead, they try to treat them ignorantly, ask an unprofessional trusted person to interfere with a cheap cost of service or leave their animals carelessly until their conditions

became worse. Animals suffer from some iatrogenic harm caused by the interference of non-professional persons trying to solve their health problems. All these render animals to be abused; abuse is defined as a non accidental, socially unacceptable behavior that causes pain, suffering or distress to and/or the death of an animal (Ascione and Shapiro, 2009). Exposure of animals to a prolonged condition of pain and stress, which refers to a state of threatened homeostasis, is a detrimental effect on animal welfare (Etim *et al.*, 2013)

Owners misdiagnoses and mistreatments or their interference with animals well being and welfare which result in losses of great economical values as animals became handicapped or non producing ones. These problems are reduced by veterinary professionals who are able to use the inductive and deductive method for animals' treatment (Yeates, 2013). In Sudan owners and most veterinary professionals are not aware of the Animal Welfare Act issued in 2015 (Mohammed, 2015) and it needs to be activated and applied under very close supervision.

This work aimed at drawing attention to the drawbacks of the irresponsible interference and mistreatment of diseased animals admitted afterwards to the TVH for the rational treatment to save animals' health and lives.

### **Cases reports**

**Study area:** The Teaching Veterinary Hospital (TVH) is one of the departments of the College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Bahri. It is located in North Khartoum, city of Bahri and it provides veterinary services to whole Khartoum state. Since June 2013 up to date, cases admitted to the TVH for veterinary care were observed and those of mismanagements

were reported and their pictures were taken using Sony Xperia 3 cellular phone camera.

**Surgical Operations:** Different anesthetic protocols and surgical operations were performed following the methods indicated by Hall *et al.*,(2001).Scrotal hernia (Abdel-Hady *et al.*,2015),castration (Bauer *et al.*,2018)mastectomy (Dar *et al.*, 2015) cesarean section, eye extirpation, amputations and wound dressing were done according to each situation and suitable suturing techniques were applied (William,2012). Proper handling of cases of dystocias (Mekonnen and Moges, 2016), uterine prolapse (Wachidda and Kisani, 2011) and foot rot (Jesse *et al.*, 2018) were undertaken.

### Discussion

Animals of different health problems were presented to the TVH after being wrongly

treated by their owners and turned to chronic cases. A ram suffering from delayed unilateral scrotal hernia (Intestine) associated with adhesions, was presented (Figure1)a surgical operation was performed for reduction of the intestinal contents and partial removal of the atrophied testis. Similarly castration was done to a ram with a previous history of acute unilateral orchitis which was neglected and turned to a chronic case (Figure2). In these cases animal rights are violated as they are exposed to pain and potential tissue damage (IASP,1979). Moreover, these conditions may result in infertile males due to the high temperature produced. High temperature affects the adjacent testis ending with testicular degeneration and reproductive loss in the farm (Parkinson and McGowan, 2019).



**Figure 1: A ram with unilateral scrotal hernia**



**Figure 2: A ram with a unilateral orchitis**

A case of a monkey with a history of simple thigh wound turned to an acute abscess (Figure 3), as well as a goat with a simple foot wound turned into a rotten one (Figure 4) were presented to the TVH.The abscess was surgically opened and dressed

and parts of the rotten foot were removed. Moreover, a case of history of acute mastitis being wrongly treated by the owner and ended up with a gangrenous one was treated by mastectomy (Figure 5).



**Figure 3: A monkey with thigh abscess**



**Figure 4: A goat with a rotten foot**

Delaying simple acute wounds by the interference of non-professionals may end with organs loss and economical disasters. These cases suffered from acute distress

where animals try to escape from stressors, but in chronic distress animals are engaged in a mal- adaptive behavior which alters their welfare (IASP, 1979, ILAR, 1992).



**Figure 5: A goat with gangrenous mastitis**

A case of calf was misdiagnosed by their owner and treated as an eye inflammation. In the TVH, it was diagnosed as ocular squamous cell carcinoma and regarded as a

delayed one (Figure 6).The associated inflammation was treated and finally the eye was surgically removed.





**Figure 6: A calf with eye tumor**

This lesion usually begins as benign and on delay they may progress to papilloma and squamous cell carcinoma ( Fornazari et al.,2017). The bad interference results in an aggravated case and exposure of animal to a very long period of pain, restlessness and ill-being in addition to the significant economical loss due to condemnation at slaughter house and shortened productive life. Some cases were admitted to the TVH with marks of burning by hot iron rods. To overcome signs of injury or infections, some

animals' owners used to treat swollen lymphnodes (L.N.), where they suspect blood parasite infection, by burning (Firing) them (Figure 7). Also they may burn any parts of the animal's body (Figure 8) regarding it as the right method of treatment without any veterinary consulta-tion, which resulted in new wounds, tremendous pain and damaged hides. These cases after blood smears examination were treated by the specific drugs for different blood parasites.



**Figure 7: Burning marks, pre-scapular L.N.**



**Figure 8: Burning on a calf's side**

A calf suffering from stomatitis and being off food has been approached by its owner by burring its upper muzzle and the cheeks from inside (Figure 9).This calf was treated by fluid therapy, pain killer and antibiotics.

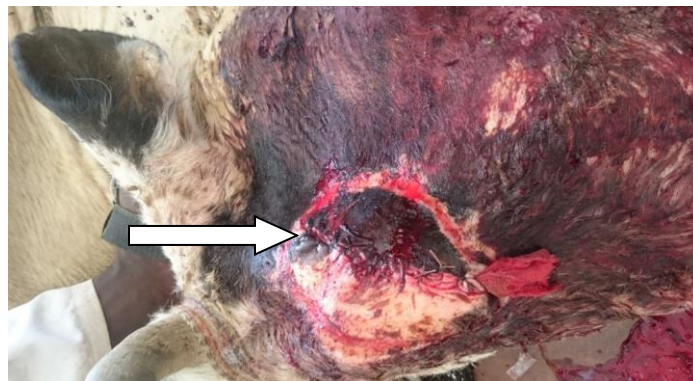


**Figure 9: Burnt upper lip**

Moreover, some animal's owner's burn the area around the eyes in case of eyes inflammations (Figure 10) which resulted in aggravated cases and finally eye extirpation was performed (Figure 11).



**Figure 10: Burnt area around the inflamed eye**



**Figure 11: Extirpated eye(Burning)**

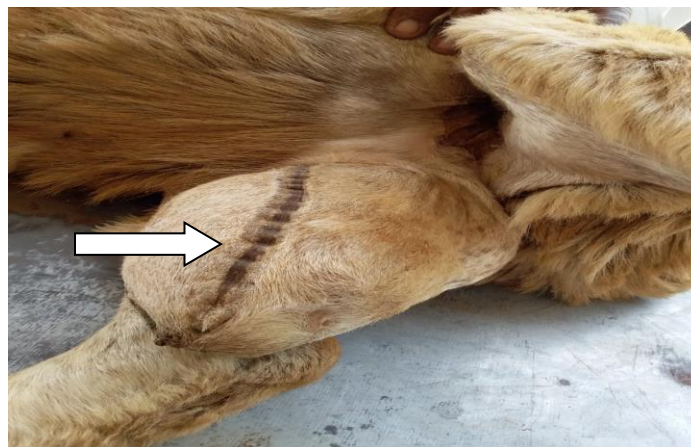
Similarly, this traditional method of burning was applied also when owners notice swollen scrotal sacs, where they perform burning in different ways (Figure 12a&b) to alleviate this condition. In such cases uni or bilateral castration was performed.



**Figure 12a: Testicular burning (Orchitis).**

In such different cases of animals burning for different organs regardless of reasons and the side effects, animals' rights and welfare are extremely violated and this represents some sort of cruelty. In human society it is widely spread, that animals used by people should not be treated like inanimate possessions but should be protected from actions that might cause suffering (Broom,2006a).The ethical

concerns for the quality of animals' life include natural lives through their development, free from intense negative states and functioning with satisfactory health and physiological and behavioral systems (Fraser *et al.*,1997).However, professional commitment to maintain animals' welfare standards may conflict with financial constraints experienced by owners (Damron,2009).



**Figure 12b: Testicular burning (Orchitis)**

The obstetrical problems associated with foetal and dam health are emergent under field conditions, which make owners interfere in any

way to save them. A goat with uterine prolapse, with faulty interference, was successfully cleaned and dealt with after admission to TVH



(Figure 13). Fortunately the uterus was not seriously damaged it was reduced, uterine pessaries were introduced and the vulva was properly sutured.



**Figure 13:A goat with uterine prolapse**

After being previously tried by the owner, a cow was brought to the TVH with a history of vaginal prolapse and the vulva was enlarged and tied by a hard rope (Figure 14). In the hospital the condition was thoroughly

examined and it was found to be complicated as it was accompanied with urinary bladder prolapse. This condition was fixed, but the vagina and vulva were seriously affected.



**Figure 14: A cow with vaginal and urinary bladder prolapse**

Moreover a cow of a history of dystocia was wrongly manipulated by the farm labors using a soft dirty rope to tie and pull the fetus (Figure 15 ) was brought to TVH.

In the hospital, the rope was removed, the uterus was properly evacuated and uterine pessaries were introduced.





**Figure 15: A dirty rope is tied to the fetus**

Also a cow suffering from dystocia, was brought to the TVH with a complain of an emphysematous dead fetus. Fetotomy was wrongly applied by the labours using unsterilized knives, the fore- limbs of the foetus were amputated and a sharp object was inserted inside its tongue to pull it during the maneuver (Figure 16), which resulted in injured and ruptured uterus of the dam. Finally this case was professionally dealt with by cesarean section and the ruptured part of uterus was sutured. However, the birth canal was extremely damaged and the owner was advised to take the cow to the slaughterhouse later. All these obstetrical conflicts, created by wrong interventions, interfered with animals' comfort and welfare. Whilst

welfare refers to a range in the state of the animal from very good to very poor, but whenever there is stress, welfare is poor(Broom, 1983; Broom and Johnson, 2000).In cases of dystocia dams are exposed to stress which indicates poor welfare that involves failure to cope(Selye, 1950; Selye, 1956,Etim *et al.*,2013). Coping implies having control of mental and bodily stability and prolonged failure to cope results in death (Broom, 2001). Both misdiagnosis and mistreatment of females' obstetrical conditions compromise welfare and have serious impacts on females' reproductive performance and consequently their general production which will lead to great economical losses (Etim *et al.*,2013).



**Figure 16: A dead foetus with amputated limbs and a sharp object in its tongue**

Generally mistreatment of affected animals is one of the serious issues of animals' welfare. Animals are not property or things, but rather living organisms not to be abused or dominated and their lives are valuable in and of themselves, not valuable because of what they can do for humans (Regan,1983). Also animals have the right to have their interest protected (Francione ,1999). People who support animals' welfare, believe that while animals are not abused, exploited and their lives are physically and psychologically comfortable they are respecting their welfare (Francione,1996).

### Conclusion and Recommendation

It is concluded that veterinary hospitals are not available in some areas or are not well equipped. Some owners had to go for long distances for veterinary services. The majority of farm animals are supervised by simple non-educated labors. The high cost of transportation and veterinary services lead some owners to adopt un professional methods of treatments or to neglect their animals.

Veterinary hospitals should be available and equipped, mainly where animal population is high. Mobile clinics should be well equipped, ready and available for health emergencies in farms . Animals' owners and labours should be educated and trained for better animal handling methods, basics of first aid till the admission to a veterinary hospital for the proper treatment.. Different extension programs and tools that cover the awareness of animal's welfare should be raised in addition to the activation of animal welfare Act.

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## الرفق بالحيوان النهج الخاطيء وسوء علاج بعض الحيوانات المصابة والمريضة

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### المستخلص

هدفت هذه الدراسة الي جذب الانتباه الي الطرق المختلفة و الاخطاء التي تنفذ بواسطة اصحاب الحيوانات لعلاج مشاكلها الصحية بطريقة غير مهنية والي أثارها المترتبة علي صحة الحيوان، ادائه، حياته ورفاهيته. الحالات التي تم احضارها الي المستشفى البيطري التعليمي بالكدرو -كلية الطب البيطري -جامعة بحري، والتي تم تشخيصها وعلاجها خطأ بواسطة اصحابها ، تم رصدها وتصويرها.المحاولات الغير مناسبة لعلاج الحيوانات اسفرت عن استئالة امد حالاتهم السيئة التي يعانون منها من الم مستمر، قلق، عدم الاكل وفقدان النشاط والوظيفة. ان تاخير ايصال الحيوانات المريضة والمتضررة الي المستشفيات والعيادات البيطرية للحصول علي العلاج المناسب في الوقت المناسب يحول الحالات البسيطة الي معقدة. الحالات التي تم تشخيصها وعلاجها خطأ قد ينتج عنها بتر للاعضاء ، فقدان للوظيفة ، وموت الامهات والاجنة كما في حالات عسر الولادة. بناءا علي ذلك فان الاداء الانتاجي والتناسلي للحيوان يتأثر سلبا او قد يفقد تماما و يؤدي ذلك الي خسائر اقتصادية هائلة . وقد خلص هذا البحث الي أن علاج الحيوانات وحمايتها من التدخلات الخاطئة المسببة للالم طويل الامد هي من المتطلبات الاخلاقية لرفاه الحيوان و يعكس جانب من من مسؤوليات اصحاب الحيوانات والسلطات البيطرية تجاه الحيوان والمجتمع.يجب علي اصحاب الحيوان والعاملين عليها ان يلموا بالخطوات الاولي للاسعافات الاولية في علاج الحيوانات واهمية عرض الحيوانات بصورة عاجلة للعناية البيطرية لانقاذ حياتهم وللحفاظ علي ثروتهم.