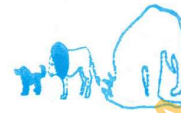


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VetAcademic Resource Foundation (VARF)



VARF is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), that is devoted to Human Resource Development and the promotion of positive socio-economic jurisprudence (psej) for animal welfare, animal and human health, livestock productivity, environmental sanitation and total well-being in three dimensions - as previously published**

QUARTERLY BULLETIN

*Second Special (inter-millennium) Edition**

*[*Summarizing the events of the last two quarters of 1998 (i.e. Volume 2, Nos. 3 & 4), the whole of 1999 (i.e. Volume 3, Nos. 1-4) and the whole of the year 2000 (i.e. Volume 4, Nos. 1-4) ending 31st December, 2000 AD]*

[Motto: Hard work, Systems' Approach and Transparent Honesty]

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11. RELEVANCE OF VALUE AND INTEGRITY TO THE IDEALS OF THE VARF ORGANIZATION AND IN RELATION TO THE MANDATE OF THE VETERINARY COUNCIL OF NIGERIA

By

B. O. OLUGASA DVM Ibadan

Department of Veterinary Public Health and Preventive Medicine, University of Ibadan

1. INTRODUCTION

The ideals of VARF organization are as contained in the twenty-five articles published in the maiden edition(1) and in the first special edition (2) of this bulletin. These ideals of the VARF organization include calls on the professionals to be cost-effectively productive of goods and services and even ideas. Attendance at continuing education workshops, participation in professional brain storming seminars and other self-improvement efforts are justified and encouraged. For further promoting, actualizing and supporting such efforts the publishing of a quarterly bulletin was commenced by the VARF organization. Veterinary intelligence activities are thus being institutionalized.

The mandate of the Veterinary Council of Nigeria (VCN) are as contained in the enabling Veterinary Surgeons Act (Decree No.37 of) 1969 and as amended in Veterinary Surgeons (amendment) Act (Decree No.40 of) 1987. Also relevant to other aspects of the Veterinary profession's mandate in Nigeria is the Animal Disease (Control) Decree (No.10 of) 1988. The Veterinary Oath, to which all graduating Veterinary Doctors in Nigeria had to swear before being admitted on to the Veterinary Surgeons' Register makes it mandatory for all to continue to improve their scientific knowledge and professional skills. Everyone has to do this and possess acceptable evidence for doing so as long as they wish to have their names so retained and to be able to be legally employed as veterinary surgeons in the country. All these are relevant to the ideals of VCN and VARF.

Putting all these ideals together, and relating them with the implications of a recent unanimous election of the president of VARF as the new president of the VCN appears to indicate veterinary public approval of the efforts of VARF organization so far in Nigeria.

2. ELABORATION

Of very recent, Nigerians have felt a touch of relief, especially in the social and political aspects of the nation's economy. The relief began with the promise of freedom, fairness and justice to all Nigerians by the new Administration of the Fourth Democratic Republic headed by President Olusegun OBASANJO. The election of Professor Esuruoso as President of the Veterinary Council of Nigeria took place a short while before the advent of this peace mission by the new civilian president. The VCN's meeting took place on 23rd September, 1998, at Damaturu, capital city of Yobe State.

There, Professor Gabriel Oluwole ESURUOSO was eventually unanimously elected as the president of the Council. It was reported that, in the brief inaugural speech made by the new president of the Veterinary Council of Nigeria, he said that he regarded his unanimous democratic election as a call to service, with gratitude to God and praise for the past efforts of his predecessors. He also expressed his opinion that having elected him unanimously to the highest office in the profession in this country, the professionals should realize that they had thus morally committed themselves to co-operate with him as he had done with all his predecessors in the office. He therefore praised God and pledged his dedication to the roles of his new office.

Next, at the very first opportunity and in a keynote address at the investiture of the Foundation Fellows of the College of Veterinary Surgeons Nigeria 'Saint Gabriel' (which means 'messenger of peace and good news') of the Veterinary Profession in Nigeria (as Professor ESURUOSO sometimes jocularly calls himself), as if heralding a unique story of goodwill towards men in the Veterinary Profession and the entire country, wished the then Military Head of State of the Federal Republic of Nigeria General Abdulsalami A. ABUBAKAR, FSS, DSS, MNI good luck for a successful election and transition to true democracy as peaceful as his own election to the presidency of the VCN. That could not have come at a better time than now, when many Nigerians obviously deserve peace.

The implication of the events mentioned above are that one expects that fellow Nigerians are likely to really appreciate and value the goodwill for peace so generously received. This, to perceiving Veterinarians in the country, may become a good beginning of better things to come. This development is honourable and worthy of emulation and support. It is equally topical for a reflection on the course of human factor* attributes that characterize our country, Nigeria and the similarities in the two gentlemen who have come to administer our affairs at professional and national levels.

Thus, there seems to be a good opportunity and room for easy transfer of the ideals of VARF to the socially cost-effective fulfillment of at least some of the mandates of the VCN. The requirements for fulfilling VCN mandate should be based on the principles and practices of positive socio-economic jurisprudence (1) , which is according to 'Saint Gabriel' himself. This calls for 'hard work, systems approach and transparent honesty' , which is the motto of VARF, just like the new anti-corruption law in Nigeria by President Obasanjo. To achieve the expected better time to come, it seems that every component of the system must co-operate and play their roles 'in timely order'*.

3. "HARD WORK, SYSTEMS APPROACH AND TRANSPARENT HONESTY"

As Veterinary Surgeons, we were told that we learnt animal health, first in the context of husbandry practices(4). At the same time we learn to appreciate hygiene, the processing, packaging, preservation, storage, distribution and utilization of healthy and

wholesome food, especially those of animal origin, as carried out by food scientists and technologists, so that we can work successfully with them all. In this way, we learn to be productive of healthy and wholesome goods, services and workable ideas. Here comes one of the ideals to meet this standard value; VARF organizes enabling workshops, brain storming seminars and symposia to equip the modern veterinarian and guide him away from the broad path to becoming obsolete or redundant. It enables the veterinary surgeon to adopt the principles of 'hard work, systems approach and transparent honesty' with adequate understanding and healthy conscience. Hence the cover of VARF Bulletin usually carries the message 'Good News for Modern Veterinarians and Allied Professionals'. To be realistic, the good news must be linked to the adoption of the VARF motto.

4. COMBATING PROFESSIONAL OBSOLESCENCE

Six out of the twenty-five articles of the VARF Organization are specifically concerned with recognition and immediate prevention of obsolescence among veterinary professionals in Nigeria. These are articles Nos. 10, 14, 15, 17, 21 and 24. Professional obsolescence occurs when an individual is no longer smartly able to diagnose and manage professional problems accurately and adequately. At that point, he or she requires some form of continuing education and/or skill development, which may be formal or informal, to upgrade, update or refresh his competence in his chosen area of professional activities. This is another of the mandates of the Veterinary Council of Nigeria, which is being boldly and ably delivered by VetAcademic Resource Foundation (VARF). Whereas, up till now, Council itself has remained apparently incapacitated one way or the other to effectively deliver this mandate.

In addition to combating obsolescence is the effort of individual operatives of VARF principles to mobilize colleagues to lift-high the good side of one another in the spirit of a healthy teamwork for the 'system's success', especially in professional merits. This is in line with what an engineer had said, thus:- 'the message for specialists should be, live at the level of your time! Crawl out of that talent-trap which you refer to as your field and look around. You may learn something about the only species you will ever be a member of' (5) ('Human factors'!). The quote in brackets is inserted by this author. It is vital that the specialist himself realizes the importance of developing a generalist overlook, for his own sake, as welder of the world (5). In this way, the objectives of the VCN in constituting a professional postgraduate College of Veterinary Surgeons Nigeria (CVSN) may be readily actualized.

Obviously, the ideas and ideals of VARF are much in one with the mandates of the VCN. VARF appreciates the fact that 'all it takes for evil to prevail is for good men to sit down and do nothing'. VARF would rather work hard, having a system's mind, nurtured with transparent honesty for systems success. These are the secrets of VARF's success story, truly a set of human factors engineering in an epizootiological sense.

5. VETERINARY HUMAN FACTORS ENGINEERING

The Systematic sourcing of such relevant information on human characteristics and behaviour, its application and management for the attainment of the above stated objectives of (safety, comfort, satisfaction and experiences) is reflected in all VARF's activities. The design, organization, production, maintenance, installation, distribution and operation, or even in the use of engineering (6) are germane to the overall objective. This area of generalist veterinary studies is a veritable good approach to veterinary work system design(1), which is in accordance with the principles of epizootiology.

Work system design is defined(6) as the process of formulating system's objectives, and the definition of their components, the boundary and relationships necessary to achieve the set objectives, to combine man, facilities, materials, information, energy and finance, toward the transformation of raw materials into finished goods and services to advance the health of livestock, that of humans and of the common environment. This is where the epizootiological approaches that VARF uses stands to effectively serve the cause of the proposed College of Veterinary Surgeons of Nigeria gainfully.

6. CONCLUSION

As VARF's ideals tend to measure the extent of delivering VCN mandate to the Nigerian Veterinary Public, she uses measurement tools to provide opportunities for objective, empirical and rational ways of ascribing values to the performance of human factors in veterinary work-systems in Nigeria. That makes, and will continue to make VARF to remain relevant and vital to the growth of both the College of Veterinary Surgeons of Nigeria, and the entire Veterinary Profession in the country. Thanks to God, and long live Nigeria.

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