



Amending the Nigerian Anatomy Act in Line with Global Trends and Towards Meeting Nigeria's Need for Sustainable Development: The Proposition

A. A. Tijani¹, J. O. Owolabi^{2*}, P. A. Adeniyi³ and D. A. Adekomi⁴

¹Department of Anatomy, College of Medicine, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria.

²Department of Anatomy, Ben Carson [Snr] School of Medicine, Babcock University, Ilishan Remo, Nigeria.

³Department of Anatomy, College of Medicine and Health Sciences, Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria.

⁴Department of Anatomy, College of Health Sciences, Osun State University, Osogbo, Nigeria.

Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between all authors. Authors AAT and JOO designed the study, wrote the protocol and supervised the work. Author JOO managed the analyses of the study. Authors AAT, PAA and DAA wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Authors PAA and DAA managed the literature searches and edited the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Article Information

DOI: 10.9734/BJESBS/2016/26886

Editor(s):

- (1) Madine VanderPlaat, Department of Sociology and Criminology, Saint Mary's University, Canada.
(2) Stan Weeber, Professor of Sociology, McNeese State University in Lake Charles, Louisiana, USA.

Reviewers:

- (1) Mangala Kohli, Lady Hardinge Medical College, New Delhi, India.
(2) Suniti Raj Mishra, G.S.V.M. Medical College, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh, India.
(3) Ferdinand Osuagwu, Central Michigan University, Michigan, USA.
(4) Deepa Bhat, JSS Medical College, JSS University, Mysuru, India.

Complete Peer review History: <http://sciencedomain.org/review-history/15230>

Policy Article

Received 8th May 2016
Accepted 22nd June 2016
Published 30th June 2016

ABSTRACT

The Anatomy Act has been part of the Laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria since 1933. Interestingly, the Act though being reviewed had never been majorly amended. This no doubt has affected the applicability, practicality and the relevance of this Act in line with current global trends in the field of Anatomy and Anatomical practices as well as how to use such an act to facilitate nation building and national development. This article presents the product of a critical analysis of

*Corresponding author: E-mail: olaowolabi001@yahoo.com;

the Nigerian Anatomy Act. The current Anatomy Act was critically and objectively evaluated based on the same acts in the selected developed countries using the British Anatomical Act- from which the original Nigerian Anatomy Act was developed- as a reference. For every statute-statement, the applicability in achieving sustainable development was objectively and critically considered. A qualitative table-tool was constructed to assess the current Anatomical Act. Criteria included the statute- statement, the objective and application, relevance, comments on areas of amendment and then the formulated proposition-statement. This article contains the proposition for amendment.

Keywords: Anatomy act; Nigeria; amendment; laws; anatomy.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Nigerian Anatomy Act- Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2010 [1], Chapter A16, is the chapter of the Nigerian law stating the regulations that guide the practice of Anatomy in Nigeria. This was historically developed from the British Anatomy Act [2]. Interestingly, Nigeria was still a British colony at the time of formulating the Anatomical Act.

Originally, The Anatomy Act 1832 is an Act of Parliament of the United Kingdom that made provision for licensed individuals to handle cadavers primarily for the purpose of teaching [3,4]. Notably, Anatomy was then basically an exploratory life science. However, series of evolutions have taken place in the Academia generally, as well as in the society. These changes have shaped global events and practices. Understandably, countries, including Britain have amended their versions of this act. Regrettably, one of the oldest Nigerian Acts for Sciences is yet to be reviewed or renewed. In United Kingdom, the original Anatomy Act has been replaced by the modern Human Tissue Act 2004 [5]; and the application has been extended to include the regulation of anonymous organ donation, licences for those intending to publicly display human remains and (prohibition) selling of organs. The Anatomical Society of Nigeria (ASN) during its 12th Annual General Meeting (AGM), 2015 [6], agreed that the Act is due for review and amendment.

This article is a presentation of the proposition for amendment following an objective review of the current yet-to-be amended Anatomy Act of Nigeria. This is done in line with the global trends and the trends of development in the provision of anatomical services as well as the demands of the modern world and to meet such needs. Obviously, the current Anatomy Act appears obsolete in terms of relevance and practice as it is hardly mentioned in the practice of Anatomy. The statutes also appear to be impractical and inadequate to meet the needs of this century. Focus is narrowed to what Anatomy was known to be in up until the 20th Century, hence narrow and limited. It is obvious that a thorough and objective review is indispensable to ensuring the workability and practicality of this act.

2. METHODOLOGY

There was a critical analysis of the current Anatomy Act of Nigeria. This was compared with various relevant Acts currently in the Nigerian Laws of the Federation. The current Anatomy Act was also evaluated based on the same acts in the developed countries using the British Anatomy Act as the default reference. Very importantly, the applicability of each statute-statement in achieving sustainable development was objectively and critically considered.

A qualitative table-tool [Table 1] was constructed to assess the current Act. The proposed new act for the amendment of the current is the product of this process [See Appendix I].

Table 1. Qualitative table-tool for the assessment of the current act and derivation of rationale for the proposed new

S/N	Statute-statement	Objective and application	Relevance	Comment on amendment	Proposition
1					

20					

3. RESULTS: THE PROPOSITION

3.1 Short Title

This Act shall now be cited as ANATOMY ACT, 2016 (AS AMENDED)

3.2 Establishment of Anatomy Council of Nigeria (ACN)

There is hereby established a body to be known as Anatomy Council of Nigeria (ACN) as an organ of the Federal Ministry of Health which shall be a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal, and may sue or be sued in its corporate name.

3.3 Power of the Council

The Council may make rules and regulations to guide the practice of Anatomy in Nigeria.

3.4 Duties and Responsibilities of the Council

The Council shall undertake or perform the following duties and responsibilities:

- i. Regulation of the training and teaching of Human Anatomy and Anatomical Sciences in Nigeria.
- ii. Regulation and control of Anatomy Laboratories (Gross Anatomy, Clinical Embryology/IVF, Histology/Histochemistry, Cytogenetics, Tissue and Organ Culture, Stem Cells Development and Storage, Sperm and Oocyte Banks, Biological/Physical Anthropology and Forensic Anatomy, etc), Mortuaries and Anatomy Museums in Nigeria.
- iii. Determination of the knowledge and skills of Anatomists.
- iv. Securing and maintenance of register of persons entitled to practice as Anatomists in Nigeria, and publication of lists of those persons from time to time.
- v. Preparation of rules/codes of professional conduct which the Council may consider desirable for the practice of Anatomy in Nigeria and review thereof from time to time.
- vi. Granting a license to practice Anatomy to individual registered Anatomists and the Heads of Departments and Laboratories of Anatomy.
- vii. Managing organ and tissue banks for forensic, medical and anthropological uses

3.5 Membership of the Council

The Council shall comprise the following;

- i. A chairman who shall have at least fifteen years post qualification experience and shall be a professor of Anatomy, appointed by the President.
- ii. A Registrar and Secretary to the Council who shall have at least ten years post qualification experience and shall be in the professorial cadres, appointed by the President.
- iii. Ten members of the Council, five of whom must be representatives of the Anatomical Society of Nigeria on professorial cadres and five others appointed by the Minister (exclusive of the chairman and secretary)

3.6 Meeting of the Council

- (1) The Council shall, for the purpose of this Act, meet not less than two times a year.
- (2) Every meeting of the Council shall be presided over by the Chairman and if the Chairman is unable to attend any particular meeting a member (who has been so qualified for not less than ten years as an Anatomist or any of its field) may be appointed by the members present to act as chairman of that particular meeting.
- (3) Where in the sub-section (2) above there is no member so qualified for at least ten years, any most senior member can be appointed by the members present to act as chairman of that particular meeting.
- (4) A quorum at a meeting of the Council shall be one-third.
- (5) The Council shall meet whenever it is summoned by the Chairman and if the Chairman is required to do so by a notice given to him by not less than five other members, he shall summon a meeting of the Council to be held within fourteen days from the date on which the notice is given.
- (6) Where the Council desires the advice of any person on a particular matter, he/she may be co-opted to the Council for such period as it deems fit but such a person shall not be entitled to vote at any meeting of the Council and shall not count towards a quorum.

3.7 Duties of the Registrar and Secretary to the Council

- (1) It shall be the duty of the Registrar to prepare and maintain, in accordance with

rules made by the Council under this section, registers of the names, addresses and approved qualifications, and of such other particulars as may be specified, of all persons who are entitled in accordance with the provisions of this Act to be registered as Anatomists and who apply in the specified manner to be so registered.

- (2) It shall be lawful for the Registrar to grant a license to practice Anatomy to an Anatomist or Anatomy Technician.
- (3) A license granted as aforesaid shall be deemed to authorize the practice of Anatomy in Departments and Laboratories of Anatomy by any Anatomist therein and by any student who is attending a course of study at such departments and laboratories when working under the supervision of an Anatomist(s).

3.8 Appointment of Committees by the Council

- (1) The Council may appoint one or more committees to carry out, on its behalf certain functions under this Act as the Council may determine.
- (2) A committee appointed under this paragraph shall consist of such number of persons as the Council may feel desirable.
- (3) The decision of the committee of the Council shall be of no effect until it is ratified by the Council.

3.9 The Minister of Health May Direct and Advice

The Minister may give to the Council directions of a general character or relating generally to particular matters (but not to any individual persons or case) with regard to the exercise by the Council of its functions under this Act and it shall be the duty of the Council to comply with the directives.

3.10 Finances of the Council

- (1) The Council shall prepare and submit to the Minister, not later than the 30th day of July of the year in which this Act comes into force and of each subsequent year, an estimate of its expenditure and income during the next succeeding financial year.
- (2) The Council shall keep proper accounts in respect of each financial year, and proper records in relation to those accounts and

shall cause it accounts to be audited as soon as may be after the end of the financial year to which the accounts relate by a firm of auditors approved, as respect that year, by the Council.

- (3) The Minister shall out of moneys provided by the Federal Government, make to the Council either by way of grant or by way of loan, payments of such amounts as the President may from time to time so determine.

3.11 Executors or Other Person Having Lawful Possession of the Whole or Part of the Body of any Deceased Person May Permit Anatomical Examination

It shall be lawful for any executor or other person having lawful possession of the whole or part of the body of any deceased person, and not being an undertaker or other persons entrusted with the body for the purpose only of interment, to permit the body of such deceased person to undergo anatomical examination, unless, to the knowledge of such executor or other persons, such deceased person shall have expressed his desire, either in writing at any time during his life or verbally in the presence of two or more witnesses during the illness whereof he died, that his body after death might not undergo such examination, or unless the surviving husband or wife or any other known relative of the deceased person shall require the body to be interred without such examination.

3.12 Provision in Case of Persons Directing Anatomical Examination after their Death

If any person either in writing at any time during his life, or verbally in the presence of two or more witnesses during the illness whereof he died, shall direct that his body after death be examined anatomically, or shall nominate the superintendent of any school of Anatomy, who is licensed under the provisions of this Act to examine bodies anatomically, to make such examination, and if, before the burial of the body of such person, such direction or nomination shall be made known to the person having lawful possession of the dead body, then such last mentioned person shall direct such examination to be made, and in case of any such nomination as aforesaid, shall request and permit any person so authorized and nominated as

aforesaid to make such examination unless the surviving husband or wife or any other known relative of the deceased person shall require the body to be interred without such examination.

3.13 Body not to be removed without a Certificate

- (1) The body of a person shall not be removed for anatomical examination from any place where such person may have died unless twenty-four hours have elapsed from the time of such person's decease; and
 - (a) A certificate stating in what manner such person came by his death shall have been signed by the medical practitioner who attended such person during the illness whereof he died; or
 - (b) If such person was not attended by a medical practitioner during such illness, a certificate stating to the best of his knowledge and belief the manner or cause of death by some medical practitioner who shall be called in after the death of such person to view his body, but who shall not be concerned in examining the body after removal.
- (2) In the case of the removal of a body for anatomical examination, any such certificate given under the provisions of subsection (1) of this section shall be delivered, together with the body, to the person receiving the same for anatomical examination.
- (3) Nothing in this section shall be deemed to prohibit the preservation of a body for anatomical examination at any time after death by injection or otherwise by the superintendent of a school of Anatomy who is licensed under this Act or by some person authorized by such superintendent.

3.14 Heads of Departments and Laboratories of Anatomy may Receive Bodies for Anatomical Examination and Mortuary Services

It shall be lawful for any head of department or laboratory of Anatomy who has been licensed under this Act as aforesaid or any teacher or medical practitioner employed in or any student attending a course of study at such a department or laboratory, the head of which has been so licensed, to receive or possess for anatomical

examination in such department or laboratory or to examine anatomically at such department or laboratory, the body of any person deceased, if permitted or directed so to do by a person who had at the time of giving such permission or direction lawful possession of the body and who had power, in pursuance of the provisions of this Act to permit or cause the body to be so examined, and provided such certificate as aforesaid were delivered by such person together with the body.

3.15 Heads of Departments and Laboratories of Anatomy to Receive with Body a Certificate as Aforesaid and Keep Record of Particulars of Deceased

- (1) Every Head of Department or Laboratory of Anatomy so receiving a body for anatomical examination shall demand and receive, together with the body, a certificate as aforesaid and shall within twenty-four hours enter or cause to be entered in a book to be kept by him for that purpose, together with a copy of that certificate, the following particulars-
 - (a) At what hour and date the body was received;
 - (b) The name and address of the person from whom the body was received;
 - (c) The date and place of death;
 - (d) The sex and as far as is known at the time the first name and surname, age and last place of abode of the deceased.
- (2) The book shall be produced by the Departments and Laboratories of Anatomy whenever required so to do by the Minister.

3.16 How Bodies are to be removed for Anatomical Examination

The removal of a body for anatomical examination as aforesaid shall be subject to the following conditions:

- (a) The body shall, before such removal, be placed in a decent coffin or shall, and be removed therein;
- (b) The person removing the body or causing the same to be removed as aforesaid shall make provision that such body, after undergoing anatomical examination, shall be decently interred in some public burial

- ground in use for persons of that religious persuasion to which the person whose body was so removed belonged or, if such religious persuasion is unknown, in any public burial ground;
- (c) A certificate of the interment of such body shall be transmitted to the State Commissioner for Health within six months after the day on which such body was received as aforesaid:

Provided that the said State Commissioner for Health may, from time to time, by order, vary the period within which such certificates of interment shall be transmitted as aforesaid.

3.17 Persons not to be Liable to Prosecution for having in Their Possession Whole or Parts of Human Body

No Head of Department or Laboratory of Anatomy who is licensed under this Act or any teacher employed in or any student attending a course of study at such a department or laboratory shall be liable to any prosecution or penalty for receiving or having in his possession for anatomical examination at such departments and laboratories, any dead human body, according to the provisions of this Act.

3.18 Act not to Extend or Prohibit Post-mortem Examination Directed by Competent Authority

- (1) Nothing in this Act shall restrain the Council from making rules and regulations on Anatomy practices in Nigeria.
- (2) The exercise of the authority in subparagraph (1) above is subject to the approval of the Minister of Health.

3.19 Anatomy Practices in Nigeria

Anatomy practices, for which licence is issued, shall include but not limited to

- i. Training of Anatomists in Nigerian Universities at all levels.
- ii. Teaching of Anatomy to anatomical, medical and allied health students in post-secondary institutions of learning.
- iii. Carrying out anatomical examinations in Anatomy laboratories in Nigeria.

- iv. Carrying out Mortuary and Anatomy Museum services in Hospitals, Research Institutes and Tertiary Institutions of learning in Nigeria.
- v. Carrying out the anatomical science of Aesthetics, Prosthetics, Physical Anthropology, Immunocytochemistry, etc.
- vi. Carrying out Reproductive Biotechnology or Embryological/IVF related and Cytogenetic procedures in Hospitals, Research Institutes and Tertiary Institutions of learning in Nigeria.
- vii. Working as Scientists and Anatomy technicians in the various laboratories of Anatomy in the country.
- viii. Working as Morticians, Curators, Sports and Exercise Anatomists, Radiological Anatomists, Histologists/Microscopic Anatomists, etc.
- ix. Working as Forensic Scientists/Anatomists and Forensic Anthropologists in Forensic Laboratories, Hospitals, the Armed Forces, the Police and various security services.

3.20 In this Act, Unless the Context Otherwise Requires –

"Post-Secondary Institution" includes; universities, medical schools, schools of nursing, schools of health technology etc.

"The President" means President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

"The Minister" means Minister of Health of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

"The Council" means Anatomy Council of Nigeria (ACN).

"Commissioner of Health" means the Commissioner of Health of the particular State in Nigeria.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 Fundamental Considerations

It is important to note that amendments are regularly required to ensure continual relevance of Constitutional Acts or Laws. It is therefore, only fundamental that the Anatomy Act be presented for amendment. However, the Act will retain its original title since this is adequately representative of the areas of concern and the applications. This title is also default for the objectives of the Act. Though the original version, which is currently in use has twelve [12] sections; there is the need for expansion to accommodate the modern demands of such an act in terms of

its adequacy and practicability. It is also worthy of note that when compared with seven [7] other similar and health related Acts in the Nigeria Laws, the Anatomical Act is the oldest; and has not, of them all, been specifically amended [7]. This shows that it is obsolete in its current status and requires immediate amendment. This might have accounted for lack of proper systemic structure of education and practices of anatomical sciences and services in Nigeria [8]. Nigeria no doubt will be losing a huge opportunity to harness skills, knowledge, and scientific discoveries and innovations in the field of Anatomical Sciences which is no doubt the bedrock of health and medical sciences in totality. Lack of effective working policies no doubt has been of the major consequences of a non workable Act [9,10].

The modern field of Anatomy or Anatomical Sciences is a large field with immense potentials for national sustainable development. Though the ancient concept of Anatomy suggests that it is an exploratory life science; modern Anatomy involves the purposeful study and exploration of the Human body to understand and appreciate its absolute nature and structure in the normal living condition in order to apply such knowledge to improve living conditions and solve problems of anomalies and diseases [10]. In the same vein, the roles of the Anatomist in the health care has advanced; the modern anatomist does not just explore the body anymore; but applies such knowledge *to improve living conditions and solve problems of anomalies and disease conditions* [10]. This definition suggests that Modern Anatomy places emphasis on Research, Service and Innovation. These should be addressed adequately by the Act.

4.2 Council and Duties

Nine sections- Sections 2 to 9- of the proposed amendment address the Anatomical Council. The establishment of a Council is unequivocally necessary. This is also in line with the current realities and practices in similar health fields with Acts guiding their practices and trainings. While there is the Anatomy Act without an overseeing council, other contemporary bodies have functional councils and these include the NCN: Nursing Council of Nigeria [Nursing and Midwifery Act], [11]; VCN: Veterinary Council of Nigeria [Veterinary Surgeons Act], [12]; MDCN: Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria [Medical and Dental Practitioners Act], [13]; MRTRBN: Medical Rehabilitation Therapists Registration

Board of Nigeria [Medical Rehabilitation Therapists Act], [14]; HRORBN: Health Record Officers Registration Board of Nigeria [Health Record Officers Act], [15]; DTRBN: Dental technologists Registration Board of Nigeria [Dental technologists Act], [16] and the MLSCN: Medical Laboratory Science Council [Medical Laboratory Science Council Act], [17]. It is therefore a necessity and as a matter of urgency that the Anatomical Council of Nigeria be established and made functional.

The above is further buttressed by the following points as illustrated in the Nigerian scenarios:

1. Medical Laboratory Science Council of Nigeria is a Federal Government Statutory Regulatory Agency established by Act 11 of 2003 (MLSCN Mandate, 2003) [17].
2. The Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria is a category B parastatal of the Federal Ministry of Health established by Decree No. 89, 1979 now known as Nursing and Midwifery (Registration etc) act. Cap. N143, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004. (NMCN, 2004) [11].
3. The Veterinary Council of Nigeria (VCN) is essentially a quality assurance organ of the Federal Republic of Nigeria established through the Veterinary Surgeons Act Cap V3 LFN, 2004 as amended (VCN, 2004) [12].
4. The Medical and Dental professions in Nigeria are regulated by the Medical and Dental Practitioners Act Cap 221 (now Cap M8) Laws of Federation of Nigeria 1990 which sets up the Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria with the following mandates: Regulation of training in Medicine, Dentistry and Alternative Medicine in Nigeria [1] Regulation of Medical, Dental and Alternative Medicine practice in Nigeria [2] Determination of the knowledge and skills of these professionals; [3] Regulation and control of Laboratory Medicine in Nigeria (MDCN, 1990) [13].
5. MRTB Nigeria was established by Decree 38 of 1988/Acts M9 LFN 2004 for the regulation and control of seven (7) professions in the Health Sector in Nigeria (MRTB Nigeria, 2016) [14].
6. The Board was established by the Federal Military Government under Decree number 39 on the 11th of December, 1989 but now under CAP. 166 LFN 1990. (HRORBN, 2013) [15].

7. Association of Dental Technologists of Nigeria saw the birth of a body to regulate the training and practice of Dental Technology through the promulgation of the Dental Technologists Registration Board of Nigeria (DTRBN) Decree No 43 of 17th December, 1987 now Act Cap D6 of 2004 (ADTN, 2010-2016) [1].

The current proposition stipulates that the council will be saddled with the responsibilities of making rules and regulations to guide the practice of Anatomy in Nigeria; and the power to execute such responsibilities shall be vested on the Council. The fields of health sciences being listed in the Section 4 of the proposition cover the mainstream of Anatomical sciences and Practices; these are currently hardly regulated. An overseeing council will greatly help to regulate research, service and practices in these fields. It will also define certain fields of anatomical practices and the roles of the Anatomist. This will definitely provide answers to the endless questions being asked by students, practitioners and the general public about the specific roles of the Nigerian Anatomist and the so expected contributions and professional expectations in the health sector and other walks of life. This will also contribute to the formulation of working policies and take care of the current scenario in which of instance, the government that accredits the training of anatomists in several Nigerian higher institutions barely advertises for the position of anatomists and barely employs the graduates in specific professional cadres [8].

4.3 The Proposition: Applications, Relevance and Developmental Potentials

The process of certification and removal or otherwise non-removal of bodies from the place of confirmation of death is important for a number of reasons; first, for medical reasons such as the need for proper confirmation and recording of deaths. This is also important to ascertain the safety of the removal and transfer of such dead bodies either due to the nature of the cause of death or the condition of the dead body. Another reason is to have measures to guide the removal and disposal of dead bodies for environmental and ethical reasons among others. This section shall ensure adherence to such regulations. An important benefit of this practice is that it will help in update national statistics adequately especially as it relates to morbidity. The sections fourteen

(14) and fifteen (15) provide guide on how to receive bodies meant for anatomical examinations and keep proper records of such. To ensure clarity and proper definitions of responsibilities and the implications; sections seventeen (17) and eighteen (18) provides further information.

4.4 Anatomy Practices in Nigeria

It is important to provide a guide on what is termed Anatomical Practices in the context of the Nigerian law and this is being described in the Section nineteen [19]. All the listed responsibilities and roles shall be seen as duties of the licensed Anatomist in the context of the Nigerian Law.

It is a matter of great importance, professional and very importantly national interest that the practices of Anatomy are properly regulated and defined by the law. The training of Anatomists requires proper regulations to ensure optimal benefits for the training of human personnel and development of human resources in this field. In the same vein, it should become a matter of importance that the teaching of Anatomy to anatomical, medical and allied health students in post- secondary institutions of learning at various levels should be done by trained, certified and licensed Anatomists. This will discourage or eliminate quackery outright and ensure professionalism. Anatomical services in various health sectors including laboratories, museums, research and service facilities should be reserved for the trained, certified and licensed Anatomist. The government is also enjoined to benefit from the huge potentials in the products of these programmes by employing them as specialists or individuals with special skills in the various departments including the Armed Forces, the Police, the Nigeria Civil Defence Service Corps and other security services. The Anatomist who specialises in the field of Anthropology, Morphology and Forensics for instance is a huge potential for such security departments.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The Anatomy Act is no doubt a necessity for the regulation of the educational and professional trainings, and practices of Anatomy in Nigeria. This will also help the nation to maximally benefit from the very important services, innovations and products of research that could be obtained from the field of Anatomy. Recommendations from this article are being highlighted as follows:

1. The Anatomy Act requires an immediate amendment by the National Assembly.
2. The proposition contained in this article should be considered as an amendment to the obsolete Anatomy Act of 1933, currently in use.
3. The amended Anatomy Act should accommodate Anatomy practices in the modern context.
4. The Council should be empowered to ensure adherence to the statutes of the Act
5. The Training and Practices of Anatomy in Nigeria should conform to the statutes of the Anatomy Act.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

REFERENCES

1. Laws of the Federation of Nigeria. Anatomy Act: Laws of the Federation of Nigeria; 2010, Chapter A16.
2. Desalu ABO. Anatomy road map and prospects in the 21 century. Osogbo, Nigeria. 2013. UNIOSUN Press. 2013;14.
3. Crowther JG. Statesmen of science. London: Cresset Press. 1965;9.
4. Hurren E. Patients' rights: From alder hey to the nuremberg code. History & Policy. United Kingdom: History & Policy; 2002.
5. Bell MD. The UK human tissue act and consent: Surrendering a fundamental principle to transplantation needs?. J Med Ethics. 2006;32(5):283-6.
6. ASN Communiqué (2012). Anatomists Seek Review of Act: Anatomical Society of Nigeria Annual General Meeting Communiqué; 2015. Available: www.medicalworldnigeria.com Assessed 8th April, 2016.
7. Tijani AA, Adekomi DA, Owolabi JO, Adeniyi PA, Ajao MS. Dissecting "anatomy" – act cap 17, laws of the federation of Nigeria; The need for its amendment. Journal of Anatomy. 2016;7(1):119-121.
8. Owolabi JO, Tijani AA, Shallie PD. An assessment of the level of motivation towards the study of anatomy among students in south-western Nigerian Universities. Journal of Health Science Research. 2013;1(1):79-89.
9. Tijani AA, Owolabi JO, Shallie PD. Nigerian students' perception of anatomy as an undergraduate degree programme. Journal of Anatomical Sciences. 2015;6(1): 7-11.
10. Owolabi JO. Introducing anatomy. Published by Ace-World Publishers, Ilorin, Nigeria; 2011.
11. NMCN. The Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria is a category B parastatal of the Federal Ministry of Health established by Decree No. 89, 1979 now known as Nursing and Midwifery (Registration etc) act. Cap. N143, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria; 2004. Available: <http://www.nmcn.gov.ng>
12. VCN. The Veterinary Council of Nigeria (VCN) is essentially a quality assurance organ of the Federal Republic of Nigeria established through the Veterinary Surgeons Act Cap V3 LFN; 2004 as amended. Available: <http://www.vcn.gov.ng>
13. MDCN. The Medical and Dental professions in Nigeria are regulated by the Medical and Dental Practitioners Act Cap 221 (now Cap M8) Laws of Federation of Nigeria 1990 which sets up the Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria; 1990. Available: <http://mdcn.gov.ng>
14. MRTB Nigeria. MRTB Nigeria was established by Decree 38 of 1988/Acts M9 LFN 2004 for the regulation and control of seven (7) professions in the Health Sector in Nigeria; 2016. Available: www.mrtbnigeria.org.ng Accessed 8th April, 2016.
15. HRORBN (2013). The Board was established by the Federal Military Government under Decree number 39 on the 11th of December; 1989 but now under CAP. 166 LFN; 1990. Available: <http://www.hrorbn.org.ng> Accessed, 8th April, 2016.
16. ADTN (2010-2016). Association of Dental Technologists of Nigeria saw the birth of a body to regulate the training and practice of Dental Technology through the promulgation of the Dental Technologists Registration Board of Nigeria (DTRBN) Decree No 43 of 17th December, 1987 now Act Cap D6 of 2004. Available: <http://www.adtn.org.ng>
17. MLSCN Mandate (2003). Medical Laboratory Science Council of Nigeria is a Federal Government Statutory Regulatory Agency established by Act 11 of 2003. Available: www.mlscn.gov.ng

APPENDIX I

S/N	Current anatomy act statute-statement	Objective and application	Relevance	Comment on amendment	Propose new anatomy act: proposition and rationale
1.	1.Short title.	Act title	Relevant and adequate	Adequate and applicable	1. Short title <i>Rationale: The current title is adequate and relevant</i>
2.	2. Minister of Health may grant licences to practise anatomy.	Handling and management of cadaveric bodies for Anatomical Examination and Education	Relevant but requires a regulatory mechanism	Need for a Regulatory Council	2. Establishment of Anatomy Council of Nigeria (ACN) <i>Rationale: A regulatory body is indispensable to effective execution and regulation of the act statues</i>
3.	3. Executors or other persons having lawful custody of bodies may permit them to undergo anatomical examination.	Handling and management of cadaveric bodies for Anatomical Examination and Education	Relevant but requires a regulatory mechanism	Need for a Regulatory Council	3. Power of the Council <i>Rationale: It is mandatory and important to specifically state the power of the council</i>
4.	4. Provision in case of persons directing anatomical examination after their death.	Handling and management of cadaveric bodies for Anatomical Examination and Education	Relevant but requires a regulatory mechanism	Need for a Regulatory Council	4. Duties and responsibilities of the Council <i>Rationale: It is very important to superficially state the duties and responsibilities of the council</i>
5.	5. Body not to be removed without a certificate.	Handling and management of cadaveric bodies for Anatomical Examination and Education	Relevant but requires a regulatory mechanism	Need for a Regulatory Council	5. Membership of the Council <i>Rationale: The act should determine council membership and the criteria for eligibility</i>
6.	6. Superintendent of school of anatomy may receive bodies for anatomical examination.	Handling and management of cadaveric bodies for Anatomical Examination and Education	Relevant but requires a regulatory mechanism	Need for a Regulatory Council	6. Meeting of the Council <i>Rationale: Council meetings and the regulation of such will be crucial to effective delivery of services and carrying out duties</i>
7.	7. Superintendent of school of anatomy to receive	Handling and management	Relevant but requires a regulatory	Need for a Regulatory Council	7. Duties of the Registrar and Secretary to the Council

	with body a certificate as aforesaid and keep record of particulars of deceased.	of cadaveric bodies for Anatomical Examination and Education	mechanism		Rationale: It is very important to define specifically the roles of the Registrar and Secretary to the Council
8.	8. How bodies are to be removed for examination.	Handling and management of cadaveric bodies for Anatomical Examination and Education	Relevant but requires a regulatory mechanism	Need for a Regulatory Council	8. Appointment of Committees by the Council Rationale: The setting up of committees, the membership and duties or roles should be defined.
9.	9. Persons not to be liable for prosecution for having in their possession human bodies.	Handling and management of cadaveric bodies for Anatomical Examination and Education	Relevant but requires a regulatory mechanism	Need for a Regulatory Council	9. The Minister of Health may Direct and Advice Rationale: The supervisory role of the Minister of Health is being defined
10.	10. Act not to extend or prohibit postmortem examination directed by competent authority.	Handling and management of cadaveric bodies for Anatomical Examination and Education	Relevant but requires a regulatory mechanism	Need for a Regulatory Council	10. Finances of the Council Rationale: The financial responsibilities of the council requires regulation
11.	11. Penalty for contravention of this Act.	Handling and management of cadaveric bodies for Anatomical Examination and Education	Relevant but requires a regulatory mechanism	Need for a Regulatory Council	11. Executors or other person having lawful possession of the whole or part of the body of any deceased person may permit anatomical examination Rationale: Regulation of Anatomical practices that involve handling and management of cadaveric bodies for Anatomical Examination and Education
12.	12. Power to make regulations prescribing forms.	Handling and management of cadaveric bodies for Anatomical Examination and Education	Relevant but requires a regulatory mechanism	Need for a Regulatory Council	12. Provision in case of persons directing anatomical examination after their death Rationale: Regulation of Anatomical practices that involve handling and management of cadaveric bodies for Anatomical Examination and Education

13.	13. Body not to be removed without a certificate <i>Rationale: Regulation of Anatomical practices that involve handling and management of cadaveric bodies for Anatomical Examination and Education</i>
14.	14. Heads of Departments and Laboratories of Anatomy may receive bodies for anatomical examination and mortuary services <i>Rationale: Regulation of Anatomical practices that involve handling and management of cadaveric bodies for Anatomical Examination and Education</i>
15.	15. Heads of Departments and Laboratories of Anatomy to receive with body a certificate as aforesaid and keep record of particulars of deceased <i>Rationale: Regulation of Anatomical practices that involve handling and management of cadaveric bodies for Anatomical Examination and Education</i>
16.	16. How bodies are to be removed for anatomical examination <i>Rationale: Regulation of Anatomical practices that involve handling and management of cadaveric bodies for Anatomical Examination and Education</i>
17.	17. Persons not to be liable to prosecution for having in their possession whole or parts of human body <i>Rationale: Regulation of Anatomical practices that involve handling and management of cadaveric bodies for Anatomical Examination and Education</i>

18.	18. Act not to extend or prohibit post-mortem examination directed by competent authority <i>Rationale: Regulation of Anatomical practices that involve handling and management of cadaveric bodies for Anatomical Examination and Education</i>
19.	19. Anatomy practices in Nigeria <i>Rationale: Regulation of Anatomy Career and Professional Practices Nigeria</i>
20.	20. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires – <i>Rationale: It is important to define key terms and context of statutes.</i>

© 2016 Tijani et al.; This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Peer-review history:
The peer review history for this paper can be accessed here:
<http://sciencedomain.org/review-history/15230>