Introduction: The continued practice of anatomical dissection in medical training has placed great demands on body acquisition. This paper aims to provide an overview on the ethical considerations in the use of unclaimed bodies for anatomical dissection.

Materials and Methods: We explored major databases such as PubMed, MEDLINE, Ovid MEDLINE, Researchgate, Google Scholar, Web of Science, and Science Direct, from January 2004 to October 2019, using selected keywords to identify and extract articles relating and peculiar to the use of unclaimed bodies for Anatomical dissection.

Results: This review yielded 40 publications with 28 meeting our quality and inclusion requirements. This paper highlighted the use of unclaimed bodies for anatomical dissection as seen in some medical schools, and the various ethical considerations associated with its continuous use in medical training globally.

Conclusion: In conclusion, the continuous use of unclaimed bodies for anatomical dissection still carries strong ethical and legal uncertainties. It is therefore recommended that there is need to formulate an all-inclusive regulation to control the use of cadavers for anatomical dissection. If appropriate legislation and guidelines are not put in place with strict monitoring, we may soon return to the cadaver trafficking era to meet up with the demand.

Keywords: Anatomy, dissection, unclaimed bodies, ethics
unclaimed bodies has become unprecedented in many countries (6, 11). A three-year study by (12) at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, revealed that all bodies used for dissection were unclaimed bodies. Of the figure, 78.6% were bodies of suspected felons who died during gunfire with law enforcement agencies while the remaining 21.4% were accident victims or some other form of unclaimed bodies (12). This situation is not very different in many parts of the world as reported by (8).

The use of unclaimed bodies remains an ethical burden (13). A study conducted by (14) noted that ethical consideration for cadavers falls under respect for human life, whether donated or unclaimed bodies. Authors have concurred that voluntary donation remains the most ethical method of body acquisition available (15, 16). Not until recently much attention was not directed at how cadavers were procured (17). A study carried out by (18) proposed that anatomists ought to lead the campaign against the use of unclaimed bodies as the practice contravenes ethical principles of beneficence and non-maleficence. Findings from this study (19) also supported the view that accepting unclaimed bodies in the first instance is simply acting to meet the demand at hand. Therefore, (16) advocates that good body donation practices should be adopted wherever possible. According to him, this will prevent the use of unclaimed bodies whose origin may even be suspicious. Already, in some places, there is a move towards eliminating the use of unclaimed bodies (9). Brazil is a case in point where the use of unclaimed bodies for studies is even supported by law (20).

However, the Department of Anatomy at the Federal University of Health Sciences of Porto Alegre, Brazil initiated body donation program to enlighten their immediate community about voluntary body donation and the process thereto. A report by (21) stated that, since its inception, there has been a gradual increase of bodies resulting from willed donations. Details of bodies used for dissection at the department of anatomy showed that 50% were those of individuals who voluntarily donated themselves while alive, 46.4% were donated by family, and only 3.5% were unclaimed bodies (21). This sort of approach according to (18) is more about ethics than legality.

While we gravitate towards total elimination of the use of unclaimed bodies, in the interim, we can adopt palliative measures. These measures will standardize the use of human tissues for learning. The UK in this regard appointed Inspectors of Anatomy as far back as 1832 (22). Although their roles were recently overtaken by the Human Tissue Authority following a new law “the UK Human Tissue Act of 2004” (23). Similarly, In South Africa, Anatomy Inspectors liaise with institutions to ensure that bodies used for dissection are legally and ethically acquired and proper records kept. In doing this, they pay visits to departments of anatomy where they assess storage facilities (24).

Conclusion

The practice of cadaver dissection itself “still carries ethical and legal uncertainties” as stated by Winkelmann (25), and it is problematic to delineate (26). How much more the use of unclaimed bodies! Looking back at the criminal history of cadaver acquisition, coupled with ethical considerations, Jones and Whitaker (9) advocated for an active shift from the use of unclaimed bodies entirely. In creating acceptable means of voluntary body donation, sociocultural and religious considerations must be made (27). A study carried out by (28)
proposed that an all-inclusive regulation be made to regulate the use of cadavers for dissection as a whole. If appropriate legislation and guidelines are not put in place with strict monitoring, we may soon return to the cadaver trafficking era to meet up with the demand.

**Conflict of Interests**
The authors have declared no conflict of interest for the present article.

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