Review of: "A Systematic Review of Antibiotic Use in Humans in Nigeria and Its Potential Contribution to Rising Antimicrobial Resistance"

Maria Jose Ruiz Alvarez[1]

1 Istituto Superiore di Sanità

This is a very interesting article, and my revision aims to clarify and make it more concise and focused, while I am also suggesting ways to address specific gaps and challenges in the original text, divided by sections:

Introduction: The introduction effectively discusses global and LMIC trends in antibiotic use and AMR but could be strengthened by explicitly connecting these trends to the specific context of Nigeria. Incorporating references to the current level of AMR in Nigeria, or acknowledging the lack of data as a significant challenge, would enhance the relevance of the discussion. Additionally, the introduction should highlight key stakeholders in Nigeria—such as policymakers, healthcare providers, and international organizations—who stand to benefit from the findings.

Methods: The screening process is briefly mentioned, with three authors independently assessing titles and abstracts. However, the text lacks details on the specific criteria used for relevance and the types of studies included (e.g., observational studies, clinical trials). Providing this information, possibly in an annex with the full protocol, would enhance transparency. Furthermore, the review does not mention how the quality of the included studies was assessed (only 18), a critical step in ensuring that the findings are based on robust evidence.

Results: The results section provides ranges of antibiotic prescriptions but does not fully explain the significance of these broader ranges or how they relate to the overall findings. Comparing antibiotic prescription rates across different regions or specific populations could help identify patterns or inconsistencies, including the discussion of the absence of studies from the north-west and north-eastern zones of Nigeria in terms of its impact on the study's conclusions. Addressing these geographic gaps would add depth to the analysis.

Discussion: The discussion could be better organized into sections such as "Summary of Key Findings," "Implications for Public Health," "Comparison with Other Studies," and "Recommendations for Policy and Practice." This would improve clarity and focus. The text should also delve deeper into the reasons why certain groups (e.g., older doctors, less confident prescribers) are more likely to misuse antibiotics and the impact of counterfeit drugs on antibiotic efficacy. Additionally, it's important to discuss the potential challenges and barriers to implementing recommended policies, such as political will, funding, or infrastructure limitations.

One Health Approach: While the review focuses on human-sector studies, the discussion could be expanded to include

the One Health approach. This would involve exploring how coordinated efforts across human, animal, and environmental health sectors could be implemented in Nigeria, underscoring the importance of a comprehensive strategy to combat AMR.