



INTESTINAL PARASITIC INFECTIONS AMONG CHILDREN ATTENDING THREE HOSPITALS IN FUNTUA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF KATSINA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Four hundred stool samples obtained from children attending three hospitals in Funtua Local Government Area of Katsina State between July, 2011 and April, 2012 were examined for presence of eggs of intestinal parasites. A structured questionnaire was administered to determine the factors that enhance the prevalence of infection. Stool samples were examined for eggs of parasites using formol-ether concentration technique and stained with Lugol iodine. The overall prevalence was 78 (19.5%). The parasites identified were Hookworm 51 (12.8%), *Hymenolepis nana* 17 (4.3%), *Enterobius vermicularis* 5 (1.3%), *Ascaris lumbricoides* 3 (0.8%), *Taenia* sp. 1 (0.3%), and *Schistosoma mansoni* 1 (0.3%). Prevalence was higher in males (24.0%) than females (15.7%). The difference obtained was statistically significant ($P < 0.05$). Children between the ages of 3-5 years had the highest odds of infection compared to 0-2 years and 6-8 years age groups ($P < 0.05$). The result of the study revealed significant association between intestinal parasitic infection among children and use of well water as source of drinking water (OR = 1.52); pipe-borne (OR = 1.29); defaecation in open fields (OR = 5.22), and use of water closets (OR = 2.08). Children who ate food served in the same plate had more odds of infection than those who ate in separate plates (OR = 2.45), eating unwashed fruits and vegetables (OR = 32.48), and children who live in same residence with animals (OR = 4.02) all showed association with the infection. The finding of the study suggests that inadequate water supply, improper waste disposal and lack of personal hygiene influenced the prevalence of intestinal parasitic infections in the study area.

Keywords: Children, *Enterobius vermicularis*, *Hymenolepis nana*, *Schistosoma mansoni*, *Taenia* sp.

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