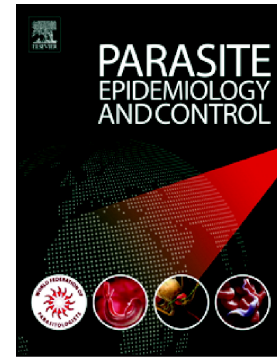


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Knowledge, Attitude and Practice in respect to soil contamination by Soil-Transmitted Helminths in Ibadan, Southwestern Nigeria

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Abstract

Ancylostoma duodenale, *Necator americanus*, *Ascaris lumbricoides* and *Trichuris trichiura*, the four major Soil-Transmitted Helminths (STHs) and also *Strongyloides stercoralis* infect humans worldwide,. Most studies on Soil-Transmitted Helminths (STHs) carried out in Ibadan were faecal examination based while relatively few soil examination based studies were carried out mostly around school premises using limited number of sampling locations. This study was therefore designed to assess the level of soil contamination with STH and associated risk factors in the eleven local government areas of Ibadan. A total of 1980 soil samples were purposively collected monthly, between January and December 2017, from toilet areas, refuse dump sites, house vicinities, playgrounds, roadsides/walk ways, and examined for the presence of parasite eggs or larvae using automated analysis of light microscopy images by computer. Well structured questionnaires were administered to 620 consenting participants to obtain information on the Knowledge of STH infections, Attitudes and Practices towards the infections. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 21, Chi-square and ANOVA were used in the analysis at $p < 0.05$. Out of soil samples examined, 1087 (54.9%) had at least one species of parasite. The prevalence of hookworm was 74.5% followed by 50.2% and 37.2% for *Strongyloides* species larvae and adult respectively, and 25.1% for *Ascaris* species. The highest prevalence was observed in the refuse dump (74.2%) followed by toilet area (36.5%) while the lowest was at house vicinities (1.6%). Fifty-seven percent of the respondents use pit latrine while 20.6% still practice open defecation. A high transmission risk was observed as large percentage (66.8%) of the respondents showed inadequate knowledge of how to avoid STH infections. Moreover, 64.0% and 25.2% reported that they often walk barefooted and suck fingers respectively. The high prevalence of parasitic contamination of soil observed in the present study and the high proportion of respondent with inadequate knowledge of how to prevent transmission of STH pose a high risk of re-infections in the study area even after treatment. Therefore there is a need for proper education on parasite transmission in the area.

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