

PA-139 **SOIL-TRANSMITTED HELMINTH INFECTIONS AND RISK FACTORS AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS IN LAGOS, NIGERIA**

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**Background** A survey of prevalence of soil-transmitted helminth infections and associated risk factors among pupils of primary schools carried out between June and July 2015.

**Methods** Four primary schools were purposely selected for the survey (2 public and 2 private). All the pupils that consented to

participate were given sterile universal containers for the collection of stool samples which were processed for examination using Kato Katz technique. Structured questionnaires were administered to the pupils to obtain demographic and risk factors information.

**Results** A total of 243 pupils aged 5–15 years were recruited for the study while 207 (85.2%) complied and returned stool samples suitable for examination. The overall prevalence of infection was 34.8% (males 36.8%; females 33%). There was no significant difference between the male and female infection rate ( $p=0.6$ ) and there was also no significant difference among the different age groups ( $p=0.7$ ). About a quarter (24.2%) of the population studied had single infection of *Ascaris lumbricoides* and 1% had hookworm infection while 4.3% had multiple infections of *Ascaris lumbricoides* and *Trichuris trichiura*. Multiple infections of *Ascaris lumbricoides*, *Trichuris trichiura*, and *Taenia* spp. occurred in 0.5%. Large proportion of pupils engaged in risk factors such as cutting of finger nails with teeth (58.5%), unhygienic eating habits (41.4%), and irregular hand washing (28.5%). Majority (71.5%) of the pupils were not aware of school deworming programme among which 35.8% of them were positive for infection. Also 39.3% of the total number of pupils (56) who engage in open defaecation and use of pit latrines were positive for infection.

**Conclusions** This showed that unhygienic habits practiced by pupils predisposed them to infection and the need to combine the school deworming programme with health education to reduce the burden of infection among pupils.