

Intestinal Parasitosis : Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices among Parents of Children aged 1-5 years in Hanwella Medical Officer of Health Area, Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Intestinal Parasitosis (IP) is a group of diseases of public health concern, caused by different species of protozoa and helminths. Prevalence is highest among children in developing countries. This study aimed to investigate the Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices (KAPs) among parents of children aged 1-5 years in Hanwella Medical Officer of Health (MOH) area of Sri Lanka towards IP to aid in identifying, planning, and carrying out effective community-based interventions. A cross-sectional study was conducted in Hanwella MOH area, from April to June 2023. A total of 282 parents were recruited using simple random sampling technique from 3 sub-areas. KAPs towards IP were assessed using a pre-tested interviewer-administered structured questionnaire and data was analyzed using SPSS version 25. Bloom's cut-off point was used to categorize KAP. Among respondents, 52.1%, 73.0%, and 61.7% had good knowledge, attitude, and practice respectively. 95% and 98.2% of respondents stated that their children wash their hands before meals and after defecation respectively. There were significant association towards knowledge with mother's educational level ($p=0.026$), family income ($p<0.001$), housing conditions (no. of rooms $p<0.001$, no of bathrooms $p<0.000$), type of toilet commonly used ($p<0.001$), and with the origin of water supply ($p=0.006$). There was a significant association between practice with the availability of separate toilets ($p<0.000$) and a significant association towards attitude with deworming frequency ($p=0.036$). There was a positive linear correlation between, knowledge and attitude, ($r=0.282$, $p<0.001$), attitude and practice, ($r=0.278$, $p<0.001$). Knowledge, attitude, and practices of parents towards IP were at a good level on average.

Keywords: *Intestinal parasitosis, Knowledge, Attitude, Practice, Parents*