

ABSTRACT

Helminth infections in humans are cosmopolitan but occur commonly in the developing countries within the tropical and subtropical regions of the world. Children are particularly susceptible and have the largest worm burden, affecting their nutritional status, physical and mental development and even their school performance. It is believed that soil transmitted helminthes (STHs) are common in Meru North District, eastern Kenya but there is lack of evidence. The present study was undertaken to determine the prevalence of soil-transmitted helminthiases (STH) among children in the lower primary schools in Tigania West, Meru North District, determine their social demographic characteristics (SDC), and other exposure factors. This was a descriptive cross-sectional, school-based study, done in 15 primary schools in the area, among 138 children, selected randomly. Stool samples were collected from the pupils whose parents had given consent for them to participate in the study, and the samples were processed using the Kato-Katz procedure, and examined by microscopy for ova of soil-transmitted helminth parasites. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data on the children's age, sex, their education levels, risk factors and their knowledge about worm infections and de-worming practices. The data were entered into the computer using SPSS version 12 and analysis done chi-square, odds ratio. The results show that of the 138 children, there was an overall prevalence of **26.8%** of STH. Hookworm (*Necator americanus* and *Ancylostoma duodenale*) accounted for 12.3%, *Ascaris lumbricoides* 8.7%, and *Trichuris trichiura* 5.8%. Individuals aged 8 years old had the highest prevalence of STH infection (29.7%). Source of domestic water was significantly associated with STH