Author’s response to reviews

Title: Prevalence of intestinal helminth infections in Jiangsu Province, Eastern China; a cross-sectional survey conducted in 2015

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Dear Editors and Reviewers:

Thank you for your letter and for the reviewers’ comments concerning our manuscript entitled “Prevalence of intestinal parasitic infections in Jiangsu Province, Eastern China; a cross-sectional survey conducted in 2015” (INFD-D-18-01531R4). Those comments are all valuable and very helpful for revising and improving our paper. We have studied comments carefully and have made correction which we hope meet with approval. Revised portion are marked in revisions mode in the paper. The main corrections in the paper and the point-by-point response to the reviewer’s comments are as following:
1. Comment: Perhaps, the most relevant question is, why only one Blastocystis case was detected in all the rural samples analyzed, which seems surprising and also strange, especially when considering that Blastocystiasis is an intestinal parasitic disease of high frequency even in developed countries. It is a matter of fact that the detection of protozoans by means of Lugol's Iodine Stain is not very sensitive, basically because it is not a concentration technique. However, it is evident that carrying out a concentration technique offers the possibility of detecting intestinal parasites without having to use molecular techniques. This situation makes me ask once again whether the title of the Ms has not been changed so that it only reflects helminth prevalences, especially Clonorchis sinensis.

Response: Thanks for the reviewer’s comments. The fact is that Blastocystis hominis cyst was only found in one fecal sample in present survey. We believe that other protozoan species may be found in our province including rural and urban areas, especially among populations with diarrhea symptom. The reason might be the detection method used (Lugol's Iodine Stain method) in present survey, which is not very sensitive, as reviewer mentioned. We will focus on the protozoan infections using concentration technique in our province in the near future. Also, we have changed the title of MS to “Prevalence of intestinal helminth infections in Jiangsu Province, Eastern China; a cross-sectional survey conducted in 2015” in the revised manuscript.

2. Comment: Perhaps, another important consideration might be why Blackground in lines 131/132 talks about "the most common intestinal parasites are STHs,........". Sincerely, it is obvious that the most common intestinal parasitizations are those caused by protozoans, and, therefore, it should be pointed out that, at least, they are "within the group of helminths." Perhaps, the question is who carried out the analysis of the samples analyzed?

Response: Thank for your good suggestion. We have changed the sentence in the revised manuscript to “The most common intestinal parasites within the group of helminths are STHs…..”.
3. Comment: Another relevant aspect is that the Kato-Katz technique is a suitable technique to analyze human feces, keeping in mind the consistency of the feces as well as the intervals of the eggs shed in order to later establish the different modalities of intensity (measuring epg). Nevertheless, that technique is applied in the present Ms to feces of very variable consistencies with regard to human feces. It is surprising that the Kato-Katz technique is applied to fecal samples of dogs, cats and pigs.

Response: Thanks for the reviewer’s comments. In present survey, we used the Kato-Katz technique to detect the helminth eggs of human feces and access the intensity of human infection. To investigate the epidemic situation of C. sinensis infection in our province, we detected C. sinensis eggs in reservoir host (dogs, cats and pigs) using Kato-Katz technique, which only to detect whether the C. sinensis egg exist or not in the fecal samples of dogs, cats and pigs. We do not use this technique to access the intensity of infection.

We tried our best to improve the manuscript and made some changes in the manuscript. These changes will not influence the content and framework of the paper. We appreciate for Editors/Reviewers’ warm work earnestly, and hope that the correction will meet with approval.

Once again, thank you very much for your comments and suggestions.