Reviewer’s report

Title: A Prevalence Survey of Enteral Parasites in Preschool Children in the Mangochi District of Malawi

Version: 1 Date: 11 May 2019

Reviewer: Uwem Ekpo

Reviewer's report:

General Comment

Because the children sampled for the paper came from children recruited for another study, which was part of a cluster-randomized placebo controlled trial. It is important that the name of (MORDOR-Malawi) study be reflected in the title. If authors wish not to include MORDOR-Malawi study in the title, then study design and sample size calculation is not appropriate for a prevalence study. Therefore, the results obtained should be interpreted with caution. To determine the burden of disease in epidemiology, requires the use of a cross-sectional study's design. Definitely this will require a large sample size than reported in this study. The author stated that they use a previous prevalence of 8% to calculate the require sample size. There is no reference to support this statement. Was the prevalence of Protozoal diseases or STH or both.

Reviewers Comment

ABSTRACT:

The abstract is satisfactory, but the author needs to review the abstract after all the necessary corrections and comments in the manuscript have been worked upon.

INTRODUCTION:

The introductory section is well drafted, but needs to be improved upon by linking the information's together and more recent references provided.

Line 64 - 67: More recent reference should be provided.

Line 84: Use soil transmitted helminths instead of Soil based helminths

Line 88: With the aim "not an aim"
Line 92 - 94: Use "helminths burden" instead of "carriage".

METHODOLOGY

Study design:

Line 99: Use "between" instead of "during"

Line 100: What samples were taken?

Line 101: Was the sample collected in all the villages in the district? If not, provide names of villages.

Line 104: The population was in which year?

Line 105 -108: Need to be revisited. Is this study a hospital based or household based research.

The study setting sections are confusing and not clear, try to revisit this section.

OUTCOME MEASURES

Line 129 - 131: rearrange this section to drive home the point you are trying to make.

Line 132: Anthropometric data were collected for height "not on the height"

Study Procedure

Line 141 - 142: "Was the instructions attached to the bottles or what?"

STATISTICAL ANALYSES

Line 166 - 167: You can rewrite these lines like this "Data collected from the study were stored in Microsoft access 2016, exported to Microsoft excel 2016 and analyzed using STATA 14.1."

Comments on methodology

§ The author did not give information's on the method used to sample eligible children.

§ Sample size estimation was not mentioned.
§ The author needs to develop a section for questionnaire administration, which should capture the socioeconomic status of the households and how the children were surveyed.

§ Map of the study area and study communities should be provided.

§ No information on ethical clearance before the commencement of the study in the manuscript.

RESULTS

Line 178: Use demographic status of study participant instead of "the sample demographics".

Line 180: Use for the study instead of "to the study".

Line 181: Use sample bottles instead of "Sample pot"

The information on Line 182 - 188 needs to be revisited and re-presented

Line189 - 191: Is this a subheading or what?

Line 191 - 194: The Information is not clear, please rewrite

PREVALENCE OF INFECTION

Line 205 - 206: The author should start this section like this A total of 193 stool samples were collected, 72 (37.3%) were infected with Intestinal parasites.

The information given between line 207 - 219 is not well arranged needs to be re-written.

The information on line 227 - 229 is not shown in table 3 and the P-value is not provided.

Line 250 - 260: There is no table showing the relationship between Nutritional status and parasitic infection in the manuscripts.

Comments

§ Table 3 is not well explained in the manuscript. The Author should link the tables together.

§ There was no table to show the prevalence of infection in the villages.
DISCUSSION

Line 263 - 265: What are the criteria? Mention them.

Line 272: Soil transmitted helminths instead soil based helminths.

I think the information on Line 275 - 289 should have appeared on the methodology.

The information on Line 343 on malaria status contradicts the information on line 369 - 390 on malaria treatment. Crosscheck and effect the necessary corrections.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

No

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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