



A Study To Assess The Knowledge Regarding Worm Infestations And Its Prevention Among Children In Selected Orphanages At Bangalore, With A View To Develop A Health Education Module

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Abstract

Background: Worm infestation remains one of the major public health challenges among school-aged children in developing countries, leading to malnutrition, anemia, impaired growth, and reduced learning capacity. Children living in orphanages are particularly vulnerable due to overcrowding, poor sanitation, and limited health awareness.

Objectives: (1) To assess the knowledge of school children regarding worm infestations and its prevention. (2) To determine the association between knowledge levels and selected demographic variables. (3) To develop a health education module for children.

Methods: A descriptive survey design was used. The study was conducted among 60 school children aged 6–12 years residing in selected orphanages in Bangalore. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire on knowledge regarding worm infestations and prevention. Descriptive and inferential statistics were planned for analysis.

Conclusion: This study highlights the importance of improving awareness regarding worm infestations among children in institutional settings. Development and implementation of structured health education programs can serve as an effective preventive strategy.

Keywords: Worm infestation, Children, Orphanages, Knowledge, Prevention, Health education

Introduction

Children represent the future of a nation, and their health status is an essential indicator of socio-economic development. Intestinal worm infestation is a significant public health issue worldwide, especially among school-aged children in resource-limited settings. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that more than one billion people are chronically infested with soil-transmitted helminths, with the highest prevalence among children. In India, the overall prevalence of worm infestation in school-aged children ranges from 50% in urban to 68% in rural areas.

Worm infestations lead to anemia, malnutrition, stunted growth, impaired cognitive function, and poor academic performance. The problem is aggravated in orphanages, where children are exposed to overcrowding, inadequate sanitation, and poor personal hygiene. Therefore, assessing the knowledge of children regarding worm infestations and educating them about preventive practices is critical.

Materials and Methods

Research Approach: Non-experimental, exploratory approach.

Research Design: Descriptive survey design.

Setting: Selected orphanages in Bangalore, Karnataka.

Population: School children aged 6–12 years residing in orphanages.

Sample Size: 60 children.

Sampling Technique: Convenient sampling.

Inclusion Criteria: Children (6–12 years) living in selected orphanages, available during the study, able to understand Kannada or English, and willing to participate.

Exclusion Criteria: Children above 12 years or not residing in orphanages.

Data Collection Tool:

Part A: Demographic proforma.

Part B: Structured questionnaire to assess knowledge regarding prevention and control of worm infestation.

Procedure: Data were collected through structured interviews with participants.

Data Analysis: Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, SD) were used to summarize demographic data and knowledge scores. Inferential statistics (Chi-square test) were planned to assess the association between knowledge and demographic variables.

Ethical Considerations: Ethical clearance was obtained from the institutional ethics committee. Informed consent was obtained from authorities of the orphanages and assent from children.

Discussion (Planned)

The findings of this study are expected to provide insights into the existing knowledge levels of orphan children regarding worm infestations and preventive measures. Previous studies in India and other developing countries have shown that children often lack adequate awareness about worm transmission, consequences, and prevention. Educational interventions have been proven effective in significantly improving knowledge and hygiene practices.

Conclusion

Children in institutional settings such as orphanages are at high risk of worm infestation due to environmental and behavioral factors. Assessing their knowledge and implementing structured health education modules can play a vital role in reducing infection rates and improving overall health outcomes.

Recommendations

Regular health education programs on hygiene and worm prevention in orphanages.

Periodic deworming drives in institutional settings.

Improvement of sanitation and safe water supply in orphanages.

Involvement of caregivers and teachers as role models in hygiene practices.

References

(References adapted from your dissertation protocol)

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