

**KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES ON CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON
INTESTINAL PARASITISM AMONG SECONDARY LEVEL STUDENTS
(A Case Study from Ratnanagar Municipality, Chitwan)**

Submitted to:

**Central Department of Sociology/Anthropology
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Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE MASTER'S DEGREE
OF ARTS IN ANTHROPOLOGY**

Submitted by:

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TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

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RECOMMENDATION LETTER

This is to certify that Mr. Ramesh Devkota has completed his thesis work entitled “Knowledge and Practices on Cultural Influences on Intestinal Parasitism among Secondary Level Students (A Case Study from Ratnanagar Municipality, Chitwan)” for the partial fulfillment of the Master’s Degree of Arts in Anthropology under my supervision. Best of my knowledge, this is an original work and has not been submitted for any other degree. I therefore recommend it for the evaluation to external examination.

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LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE

We have conducted the viva-voce examination of the thesis submitted by Mr. Ramesh Devkota entitled “Knowledge and Practices on Cultural Influences on Intestinal Parasitism among Secondary Level Students (A Case Study from Ratnanagar Municipality, Chitwan)” and found that the thesis to be an independent work of the student written according to the prescribed format. We approved that the thesis to be accepted as the partial fulfillment to qualified for awarding Master's Degree of Arts in Anthropology.

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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to determine the knowledge of secondary level students' on daily human practices and their influences in human parasitic infections. One hundred ten male and female secondary level students from two secondary schools of Ratnanagar municipality were asked to fill a questionnaire to determine their knowledge on cultural influences in human parasitic infections. Out of total 110 respondents, 30 percent were below 15 years and 70 percent were between 15 and 19 years of age. Around 51 percent of them were from Brahmin community followed by Chhetri (15%), Newar (11%), Tharu (10%), other groups (8%), Tamang (4%) and Gurung (2%). Among the total respondents 86 percent were Hindu followed by Buddhist (6%), Christian (3%), Muslim (2%) and others (3%). 92 percent respondents' fathers and around 87 percent mothers were literate. Based on occupational status, around 36 percent of the respondents were from agriculture background followed by business, private employee and others occupation. Majority of the respondents' (43%) mothers were engaged in agriculture and least proportion (1%) mothers were engaged in government employment. Among male respondents all have electricity followed by TV, radio, phone, computer and e-mail/internet. Similarly, among females all have electricity followed by TV, phone, radio, computer and e-mail/internet. Of the total 110 stool samples tested, 43 (39.1%) were found positive for parasites with highest prevalence in females. The most prevalent parasite was *Giardia lamblia* followed by *Trichuris trichura*, *Ascaris lumbricoides*, *Entamoeba histolytica*, hook worm and *E. coli* with co-infection of round worm and *E. histolytica*.

Out of 110 respondents, most (98.2 %) had heard about the parasites. About 76 percent of them had heard about Malaria parasites followed by Hookworms, Tape worms, Liver flukes, Round worm, Whip worm and Others. Majority of them had obtained knowledge on parasites from text books. Around 45 percent of the respondents said that parasites were very harmful followed by harmful (43.5%), neither harmful nor useful (6.5%) and don't know (4.6%). 25 percent respondents said that drinking contaminated water was the most potential source of parasite transmission followed by walking bare foot, eating contaminated food, close companion with domestic animals, swimming /washing or fishing in polluted water and don't know. Around 22 percent of the respondents said that wash hand before eating and after toilet is the most important preventive method of parasitic transmission followed by proper use of latrine, avoid walking bare food, protect food from house flies or other insects, do not eat contaminated food, do not drink contaminated water, washing fruits and vegetables before eating and don't know. Children were the most vulnerable age group and farmers were the most risk occupational group of parasitic infection. All of the respondents have latrines at their home and all of them use it properly. 79 percent of the respondents claimed that their family members have no parasitic infection in the past six months.

In conclusion the female respondents in spite of having higher knowledge on parasitic infection have higher parasitic load. The age of the respondents' have some role to determine the respondents' knowledge on parasites but religion, caste and parents' educational and occupational status have no role in determining the knowledge of respondents' on parasites.

CONTENTS

<u>Recommendation Letter</u>	i
Letter of Acceptance	ii
Acknowledgement	iii
Abstract	iv
Contents	v
List of Tables	viii
List of Figures	ix
Abbreviations	x
<u>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION</u>	1
<u>1.1 Background of the study</u>	1
<u>1.2 Statement of the problem</u>	4
<u>1.3 Objectives of the Study</u>	6
<u>1.4 Significance of the study</u>	7
<u>1.5 Limitation of the study</u>	7
<u>1.6 Organization of the Study</u>	8
<u>1.7 Conceptual Framework</u>	8
<u>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW</u>	10
<u>2.1 Literature review in the World context</u>	10
<u>2.2 Literature Review in Context of Nepal</u>	12

<u>CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY</u>	15
<u>3.1 Study Area</u>	15
<u>3.2 Nature and Source of Data</u>	16
<u>3.3 Sample Size</u>	16
<u>3.4 Method of Data Collection</u>	17
<u>3.4.1 Fecal sample collection, preservation and detection of parasites</u>	17
<u>3.4.2 Questionnaire design</u>	17
<u>3.5 Analysis Method</u>	18

CHAPTER FOUR: BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

	19
<u>4.1 Age-Sex</u>	19
<u>4.2 Caste/Ethnicity</u>	20
<u>4.3 Religion</u>	21
<u>4.4 Parent's Educational Status</u>	22
<u>4.5 Mother's Education</u>	23
<u>4.6 Father's Occupation</u>	24
<u>4.7 Mother's Occupation</u>	25
<u>4.8 Facility at Home</u>	26
<u>4.9 Distribution of the parasitic infection</u>	27

CHAPTER FIVE: KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR OF RESPONDENTS

<u>TOWARDS PARASITIC INFECTIONS</u>	29
<u>5.1 Knowledge on Health, Culture and Intestinal Parasitism</u>	29
<u>5.1.1 Heard of Parasites</u>	29
<u>5.1.2 Knowledge on the potential source of parasitic transmission</u>	31
<u>5.1.3 Opinion of Respondents' on Parasites</u>	32
<u>5.1.4 Knowledge on Potential Sources of Parasitic Transmission</u>	36
<u>5.1.5 Knowledge on Preventive Methods of Parasitic Transmission</u>	36
<u>5.1.6 Knowledge of Respondents on most Vulnerable age group of Parasitic Infection</u>	37
<u>5.1.7 Knowledge on most Vulnerable Occupational Group of Parasitic infection</u>	40
<u>5.2 Availability of latrine in respondent's house and its use</u>	43
<u>5.3 Presence of Parasitic Infection within past six Month</u>	44
<u>CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS</u>	45
<u>6.1 Summary</u>	45
<u>6.2 Conclusions</u>	47

REFERENCES **49**

QUESTIONNAIRE

PHOTO PLATES

LIST OF TABLES

Table no. 3.1:	Distribution of sample size by schools	16
Table no. 4.1:	Distribution of respondents by age-sex	19
Table no. 4.2:	Distribution of respondents by caste/ethnicity	20
Table no. 4.3:	Distribution of respondents by religion	21
Table no. 4.4:	Distribution of respondents by father's educational status	22
Table no. 4.5:	Distribution of respondents by mother's educational status	24
Table no. 4.6:	Distribution of respondents' by father's occupation	25
Table no. 4.7:	Distribution of respondents by mother's occupational status	26
Table no. 4.8:	Distribution of respondents by facility at home	27
Table no. 4.9	Distribution of parasitic infection based on gender of the respondents	28
Table no. 5.1:	Distribution of respondents based on their knowledge on the source of parasite transmission	31
Table no. 5.2:	Percentage distribution of respondents' views towards parasites by background characteristics	33
Table no. 5.3.	Distribution of respondents by their knowledge on the preventive methods of parasitic transmission	37
Table no. 5.4:	Percent Distribution of Respondents by their View towards most Vulnerable age group of Parasitic Infection by their Background Characteristics	38
Table no. 5.5:	Percentage distribution of respondents by knowledge on most vulnerable occupational group of parasitic infection by their background characteristics	41

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure no. 1.1	Overview of relationships between social and economic variations and health	9
Figure no. 4.1:	Prevalence of parasitic infection among respondents	28
Figure no. 5.1:	Distribution of respondents by the source of knowledge	30
Figure no. 5.2:	Overall distribution of respondents based on their opinion to parasites	35
Figure no. 5.3:	Distribution of respondents based on their knowledge on the most potential source of parasitic transmission	36
Figure no. 5.4:	Distribution of respondents' latrine based on its location	43
Figure no. 5.5:	Distribution of respondents based on their knowledge on the presence of parasitic infections in their family members within post six months	44

ABBREVIATIONS

- ADL : Adenolymphangitis
- DALYs : Disability Adjusted Life Years
- DDT : Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane
- UNFPA : United Nation Fund for Population Activities
- VDC : Village Development Committee
- WHO : World Health Organization