

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Jigger flea, also known as sand flea, Chigoe or *Tunga penetrans* is an ecto-parasite which causes Tungiasis, a parasitic infection of both humans and animals such as pigs, goats, sheep, and cattle. “The jigger flea affects many poor and ignorant populations living in Sub-Saharan Africa especially rural communities of Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, the Caribbean and South America, hence hundreds of millions of people are at risk of infection in more than 70 nations, mostly in developing countries” (Nyeri, 2009). The importance of *Tunga* infestation is localization in the foot causing itching, pain, discomfort and difficulty in walking in worst affected people, reducing the infected person’s ability to study, work normally in addition to segregation and social stigmatization. “In endemic areas, prevalence ranges from 15-40%”. The main objective of this study was to assess knowledge, attitudes and practices of the people aged between 10-45 years old on jigger flea infestation in Namalu sub county, Nakapiripirit district. The objectives were: knowledge, attitudes and practices of community members (10-45) on jigger infestation in Namalu subcounty, Nakapiripirit district.

Methodology: The study adopted a cross sectional survey with a total number of 323 individuals were sampled and 138 were interviewed accordingly using pretested self-administered questionnaires. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches of data collection and analysis were used during the study. Data was obtained from a cross sectional study design used to determine population size to be interviewed. The tool used for data collection was a self-administered questionnaire. And data was organized and summarized using frequencies and percentages.

Results: The major findings of the study were; a significant number of community members had low levels of education 35% and this could have contributed to the increased rate of infection. Knowledge on jigger infestation is high 70%, but has not translated to jigger prevention and control in the area, Community members kept their domestic animals in their houses or compounds and attributed this to insecurity, a significant number of community members disposed their solid wastes to nearby garbage collection pits.

The recommendations included: In order to deal away with jigger menace threatening the lives of the population in Namalu subcounty, Nakapiripirit district, collective approaches should be employed which involve multisectoral, multidisciplinary approaches against jigger flea infestation. Community outreach programs aimed at informing, health educating community members about jigger flea control and preventive measure have to be established. Community health workers should also be trained and well equipped on how to combat the infestation whenever the prevalence becomes severe.