

Studies conducted so far do not highlight much on the epidemiological aspects of the intestinal protozoa and helminths in rural population of India. Much of research work published on the subject so far is hospital-oriented. A number of surveys in rural areas have no doubt been carried out but most, if not all of them, were of short duration, which failed to reveal the incidence rate, duration of excretion and seasonal variation i.e. the distribution pattern of intestinal parasitic infections particularly in an apparently healthy community.

To highlight the above facts, various factors such as environmental conditions, available sanitary facilities, dwelling habits, mode of defaecation, personal cleanliness, food habits, prevalence of fly nuisance and other hygienic and socio-economic factors which are responsible for the persistence of intestinal parasitic infections in a community are to be considered.

Pertinent information on all these facts and factors are most important to plan and adopt proper measures to eliminate or control these infections not only in an individual but in a community.

For complete understanding of these aspects a study was undertaken with the following objectives:-

Objectives

- i. To determine prevalence and incidence rates (Mac Mahon, et al., 1970 and Swaroop, 1960) every three months for a period of two years.
- ii. To observe the seasonal pattern of infections.
- iii. To study the variation in infections according to age, sex and size of household.

- iv. To find out the role of sanitation, water supply, fly nuisance, personal habits and type of houses in the spread and maintenance of the infections.
- v. To study the duration of excretion by individuals i.e. carrier state.
- vi. To evaluate the illness attributable to different parasites.

A detailed analysis of these findings was undertaken to determine the distribution pattern of intestinal parasitic infections in an apparently healthy rural community.

Selection of the study area

A rural environment under the impact of the present agrarian development and close communications with an urban neighbourhood was sought which would satisfy the following conditions keeping in view the objectives of the study:-

- i. The area should represent a typical rural characteristic such as most of the inhabitants live on agricultural occupations.
- ii. There should also be people engaged in different kinds of village industries, such as weaving, pottery, carpentry, blacksmith and similar indigenous village industries.
- iii. There should be different groups of people who differ widely in their socio-economic background and living habits.
- iv. There should be easy communication between the selected area and nearest township.

Considering the above criteria and keeping in view the objectives of the study, Malakhera village which is situated to the south of Alwar, Rajasthan was selected. Considering also that not adequate information is available on the intestinal parasitic infections in the Rajasthan state and taking into view that the area proposed would be relevant for the study, this rural area was chosen.

THE SELECTED VILLAGE AND ITS POPULATION

The village Malakhera is situated on the southern part of the district Alwar in Rajasthan. It is about 22 kilometers away from the town of Alwar and is connected with the city by road and rail. Alwar is about 165 km. south-west of Delhi. Map No.1, page-6 shows the location of the village.

The village, divided into ten wards, has a total of 723 households with 4739 individuals. Distribution of population in different wards is as follows:-

Ward No.	Household	P o p u l a t i o n			
		Male	Female	Total	
1	90	272	254	526	
2	66	218	185	403	
3	75	262	250	512	
4	84	259	244	503	
5	84	267	233	500	
6	74	263	258	521	
7	56	229	209	438	
8	45	200	180	380	
9	69	235	222	457	
10	80	264	235	499	
Total	10	723	2469	2270	4739