

Significant bilharzia associated bacteriuria in Abu Rukba Sudanese Village

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Abstract:

Bilharzia or Schistosomiasis is a parasitic disease affects 200 million people worldwide and is considered one of the most serious infections. Schistosoma haematobium is pathogenic to humans and causes blood in the urine and sometimes in the stool. However,

haematuria may enhance bacterial growth in bilharzia patients' urinary tract, but studies on the relationship between bilharzia and urinary tract infection from different regions are conflicting. We aimed to study association between urinary tract bacterial infections and schistosomiasis, and antibiotic susceptibility pattern of isolated bacteria, in Abu Rukba village in the White Nile State, Sudan. Microscopy, cultivation, biomedical analysis and antibiotic susceptibility were utilised to identify S. haematobium and isolated bacteria. Both gram-positive and gram-negative bacteria were isolated from the samples. The gram-positive bacteria were Staphylococcus aureus and Enterococcus faecalis compared the gram-negative bacteria that were Escherichia coli, Klebsiella pneumoniae and Proteus species. The most frequent bacteria in S. haematobium positive and S. haematobium negative samples were S. aureus, E. faecalis, E. coli, K. pneumonia, respectively. Prevalence of bilharzia associated bacteriuria (29%) differed significantly from that of bacteriuria alone (21%) since p value of χ^2 was 0.04. The isolated bacteria were susceptible to most antibiotics utilised in this study. Number of growing bacteria in the S. haematobium positive samples was significantly more than number of growing bacteria in the S. haematobium negative samples. Thus schistosomiasis might enhance Bilharzia associated bacteriuria due to biology of schistosomes.

Key words: Bilharzia, Urinary Tract Bacterial infections, Significant Association, Antibiotic susceptibility.

INTRODUCTION

Schistosomiasis is a parasitic disease caused by digenetic blood trematodes. The three main species infecting humans are *Schistosoma haematobium*, *S. japonicum*, and *S. mansoni*. Two other species, more localized geographically, are *S. mekongi* and *S. intercalatum*¹. *S. haematobium* is the causative agent of Bilharzia disease (schistosomiasis). The disease affects 200 million people worldwide and is considered one the most serious infections today^{2, 3}. *S. haematobium* has a very complex life

cycle that is distinct from many trematodes in that the sexes are separate in this species. Adult males are around 10 mm and females are 15 mm in length. Both sexes of *S. haematobium* have a strong oral sucker and a smaller posterior ventral sucker. Males have a gynecophoral canal where females are usually located. Both male and females must remain together for long periods of time in order for the males to fertilize the females having uterus can contain 20-200 eggs^{1, 4, 5}. *S. haematobium* is pathogenic to humans and causes blood in the urine and sometimes in the stool. Persons affected by *S. haematobium* may also develop cough, fever, skin inflammation, and tenderness of the liver because the spined eggs attach to vital organs and cause tissue degeneration. Later stages of the disease may be characterized by the swelling and damaging of the bladder, liver, and other organs. The eggs of *S. haematobium* can clog the bladder neck and cause infection. Many researchers have also observed damage on other body structures. Chronic schistosomiasis raises the incidence of bladder cancer in many Middle Eastern countries^{2, 3}. Bilharzia is a common public health problem in the world¹. Individuals may acquire the disease during contact with water containing cercariae of the parasite². *S. haematobium* is responsible for majority of deaths due to schistosomiasis in the world³. Schistosomiasis is a major tropical and subtropical disease commonly found widespread in many African countries and other developing countries in Asia and South America. It is the second most prevalent tropical disease after malaria⁴. Association between schistosomiasis and bacteriuria is not clear yet since Pugh and Gilles (1979) and Eyong et al. (2008), found no association between bacteriuria and schistosomiasis in Mahufashi area in Northern Nigeria^{6, 7}. While, Adeyeba and Ojeaga (2002) found 920 out of 1600 (57.5%) were infected with *S. haematobium* and the frequency of bacteremia was 75.4%⁸. We examined 1029 urine samples for schistosomiasis and

bacteriuria and published an article about the result of schistosomiasis only⁹ and kept result of bacteriuria to this study that aimed to investigate prevalence of bacteriuria in 594 *S. haematobium* positive and 435 *S. haematobium* negative urine samples collected from the 1029 individuals in Abu Rukba village in the White Nile State of Sudan, in order to clarify the association between urinary tract bacterial infections and schistosomiasis, in addition to estimate antibiotic susceptibility pattern of isolated bacteria.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Study design, area, and sample collection

A longitudinal case control study was conducted in Abu Rukba village in the White Nile State that is situated 94 Km south west of Kosti, Sudan. The study was carried out on a population of 1029 individuals (513 males and 516 females) including pupils, house wives, farmers and workers that subdivided into 5 age groups. The study commenced in November 2011 and ended in November 2013.

Midstream urine samples were collected aseptically as possible, in a sterile wide mouth container in the morning. Each individual was asked to do some exercise before taking the urine specimen. All samples were processed by the laboratory within 2 hours of collection, or were kept refrigerated at 4° C until delivery to the laboratory and were processed no longer than 4 hours after collection.

Cultivation of urine samples, identification of growing bacteria and susceptibility to antibiotics

The urine samples were cultured on Cysteine Lactose Electrolyte Deficient (CLED) agar plates and incubated aerobically at 37°C overnight¹⁰. Identification of growing bacteria was performed according to standard bacteriological

methods. Sensitivity of bacteria to each antibiotic was carried out by measuring the diameter of inhibition zone of bacterial growth around the disc, and compared with a standard table¹⁰.

Statistical analyses

Chi-2 test was used for comparison between numbers of growing bacteria in the *S. haematobium* positive samples and numbers of growing bacteria in the *S. haematobium* negative samples. A *p* value of ≤ 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

RESULTS

An elevated number of urinary tract bacterial infections in *S. haematobium* positive urine samples

Out of 594 positive urine samples for *S. haematobium*, 294 samples were positive for bacteria. The 435 negative urine samples for *S. haematobium* exhibited bacterial growth in 215 samples (Figure 1).

Prevalence of bilharzia associated bacteriuria was 29% and that of bacteriuria alone was 21%. The statistical analysis showed that number of growing bacteria in the *S. haematobium* positive samples was significantly more than number of growing bacteria in the *S. haematobium* negative samples (*P* of χ^2 was 0.04).

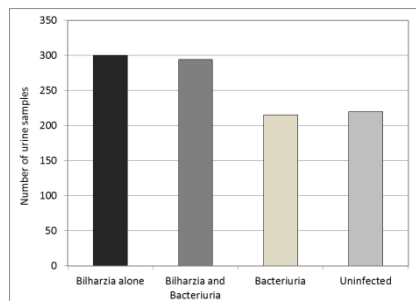


Figure 1: Number of urine samples positive for bilharzia alone, both bilharzia and bacteriuria, bacteriuria alone and uninfected urine samples.

Distribution of bilharzia alone, bilharzia associated bacteriuria and bacteriuria alone in the population according age groups

Numbers of bilharzia alone, bilharzia associated bacteriuria and bacteriuria alone in age groups 1-10, 11-20, 21-30, 31-40 and over 40 year for the examined population were 146, 143 and 89; 120, 118 and 70; 13, 14 and 13; 11, 10 and 10; 10, 9 and 33, respectively (Table 1). Group 1-10 year was the most infected group with bilharzia alone, bilharzia associated bacteriuria and bacteriuria alone. Group 31-40 was the less infected. Each group did not show significant difference between bacteriuria alone and bilharzia associated bacteriuria. But the difference between total numbers of bilharzia alone, bilharzia associated bacteriuria and bacteriuria alone (300, 294 and 215) was significant since p of χ^2 was 0.04 (Table 1).

Table 1: Numbers of bilharzia alone, bilharzia associated bacteriuria and bacteriuria alone in the population

Age in year	Bilharzia only	Bilharzia associated bacteriuria	Bacteriuria only	Uninfected samples	Total	P of χ^2
1-10	146	143	89	90	468	> 0.05
11-20	120	118	70	72	380	> 0.05
21-30	13	14	13	14	54	> 0.05
31-40	11	10	10	11	42	> 0.05
Over 40	10	9	33	33	85	> 0.05
Total	300	294	215	220	1029	< 0.05

Distribution of bilharzia associated bacteriuria and bacteriuria alone in the population according gender

Bakhit et al. 2014 studied bilharzia distribution between 513 males and 516 females out of 1029 population and found 317/513 of the males compared to 277/516 of the females had bilharzia. Here, we studied distribution of bacteriuria in bilharzia positive and negative urine samples and found 157/317 of the males compared to 137/277 of the females who had bilharzia also had bacteriuria (Table 2).

Table 2: Bilharzia associated bacteriuria in gender groups

Gender	Examined	Bilharzia associated Bacteriuria	Frequency %	P of χ^2
Males	317	157	27	> 0.05
Females	277	137	23	
Total	594	294	49.5	

Distribution of bacteriuria in bilharzia negative urine samples showed that 115/232 of males and 100/202 of the females had bacteriuria (Table 3).

Table 3: Bacteriuria in bilharzia negative samples in gender groups

Gender	Examined	Bacteriuria	Frequency %	P of χ^2
Males	232	115	26	> 0.05
Females	202	100	23	
Total	435	215	49	

Growth of bacteria in *S. haematobium* positive and *S. haematobium* negative urine samples

Bacterial culture of the *S. haematobium* positive urine samples revealed growth of *Staphylococcus aureus* in 116 urine samples, *Enterococcus faecalis* in 57, *Escherichia coli* in 28, *Klebsiella pneumonia* in 20, *Proteus species* in 2 and mixed infection in 71 (Table 4). Moreover, bacterial culture of the *S. haematobium* negative urine samples revealed growth of *S. aureus* in 63 urine samples, *E. faecalis* in 57, *E. coli* in 21, *K. pneumonia* in 12, *Proteus species* in 4 and mixed infection in 58 (Table 4). The most frequent bacteria in *S. haematobium* positive and *S. haematobium* negative samples were *S. aureus*, *E. faecalis*, *E. coli* and *K. pneumoniae*, respectively.

Table 4: Number and frequency rates of bacteria isolated from *S. haematobium* positive and *S. haematobium* negative urine samples.

Examined urine samples	<i>S. haematobium</i> positive		<i>S. haematobium</i> negative	
	Positive	Frequency %	Positive	Frequency %
<i>Staphylococcus aureus</i>	116	39.5	63	29.2
<i>Enterococcus faecalis</i>	57	19.4	57	26.5
<i>Escherichia coli</i>	28	9.5	21	9.8
<i>Klebsiella pneumoniae</i>	20	6.8	12	5.6
Proteus spp	2	0.7	4	1.9
Mixed infection	71	24.1	58	27
Total	294	100	215	100

Antimicrobial susceptibility and treatment of the isolated bacteria from *S. haematobium* positive and *S. haematobium* negative urine samples

100% of the isolated bacteria species were found sensitive to ceftriaxone and amoxyclav. Moreover, 90% of isolated organisms were found sensitive to norofloxacin and ciprofloxacin. However, all the isolated bacteria were found resistant to amoxicillin (Table 5). All urinary tract bacterial infections were treated with antibiotics.

Table 5: Antibiotic susceptibility rates (%) of sensitive (S) and resistant (R) isolated bacteria from *S. haematobium* positive and *S. haematobium* negative urine samples.

Isolated bacteria	Antibiotics and their susceptibility rates (%)									
	Amoxyclav		Ceftriaxone		Ciprofloxacin		Norofloxacin		Amoxicillin	
	S	R	S	R	S	R	S	R	S	R
<i>S. aureus</i>	100	0	100	0	90	10	90	10	0	100
<i>E. faecalis</i>	100	0	100	0	90	10	90	10	0	100
<i>E. coli</i>	100	0	100	0	90	10	90	10	0	100
<i>K.pneumoniae</i>	100	0	100	0	90	10	90	10	0	100
Proteus spp	100	0	100	0	90	10	90	10	0	100

DISCUSSION

Our study investigated prevalence of bacteriuria in 594 *S. haematobium* positive and 435 *S. haematobium* negative urine samples collected from the population of Abu Rukba village in the White Nile State of Sudan. Both gram-positive and gram-negative bacteria were isolated in this study. The gram-positive bacteria were *S. aureus* and *E. faecalis* and the gram-negative bacteria were *E. coli*, *K. pneumoniae* and Proteus species were isolated from *S. haematobium* positive versus *S. haematobium* negative urine samples. The most frequent bacteria in *S. haematobium* positive and *S. haematobium* negative samples were *S. aureus*, *E. faecalis*, *E. coli* and *K. pneumoniae*, respectively.

All the isolated bacterial species were susceptible to ceftriaxone, amoxyclav, norofloxacin and ciprofloxacin. However, all the isolated bacteria were found resistant to amoxicillin. In this context, Ossai reported that nitrofurantoin, gentamicin and oframax were the most effective drugs for the management of bacterial infections among his student population. He found also that all the bacterial isolates were resistant to oxacillin and augmentin¹¹. Very limited number of studies assumed that no association was found between bacteriuria and *S. haematobium* infection in the Malumfashi area. The lack of association between urinary bacterial infection and schistosomiasis probably reflects the low intensity of *S. haematobium* infection in the Malumfashi area of northern Nigeria⁶. Whatever, despite an elevated prevalence rate of urinary schistosomiasis in this community to be 51% there was no significant difference in the prevalence of bacteriuria among children with and without urinary schistosomiasis⁷.

We found bacterial growth in 294 out of 594 samples of the *S. haematobium* positive samples showing a significant

difference than the bacterial growth in 215 out of 435 *S. haematobium* negative samples (P of χ^2 was 0.04). Thus, our findings disclosed that the presence of *S. haematobium* was significantly associated with high prevalence of bacteriuria. In agreement with other researchers who also isolated bacteria from *S. haematobium* positive urine samples and emphasized this significant association^{8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19}. It was assumed that the difference in bacteriuria prevalence among schistosomiasis infected and uninfected populations in urinary schistosomiasis endemic areas might be higher than in non-endemic areas. In this context, a field study in an area of intense *S. haematobium* infection in a Gambian community was reported that the prevalence of bacteriuria was significantly greater than in non-endemic areas¹². Moreover, a survey in Egypt found that the prevalence of bacteriuria between school children was 10 times higher in areas endemic for urinary schistosomiasis¹³. In this paper, we try to discuss the following question: Why prevalence of bacteriuria in bilharzia patients was higher than that bacteriuria in bilharzia negative patients? We think that there are many factors related to *S. haematobium* biology enhancing urinary tract bacterial growth in schistosomiasis patients. This parasitic flatworm *S. haematobium* called blood fluke which typically lives inside the veins having suckers and hooks for attachment to blood veins of the host. The eggs have spines to attach the wall of urinary bladder leading to haematuria that enhances bacterial growth and causes urinary tract infection. Schistosoma species feed on patient blood during their long lifespan (5-10 year)²⁰. Moreover, it was demonstrated the parasite-bacteria interaction of Salmonella species was on the surface of adult Schistosomes. Salmonella species were bounded to the surface tegument of Schistosoma species and the bacterial pili are the appendages necessary for bacteria-parasite surface interaction^{21, 22}. Unfortunately, *S. mansoni* infects together with *S.*

haematobium same patients and increase severity of schistosomiasis²³.

It is known also that life cycle of the schistosome consists of egg, larvae (miracidia and cercaria), and adult worm. The cercariae will feed on blood in the vessels until they reach their adult parasites. Unusual among parasitic helminths, the long-lived adult worms, continuously bathed in blood, take up nutrients directly across the body surface and also by ingestion of blood into the gut. The amount of blood ingested into the gut per day is considerable about 100 nl for males and for the more actively feeding females about 900 nl that volume is 4 times more than body volume of the worm²⁰. Moreover, eggs of adult *S. haematobium* and *S. mansoni* are characterized by terminal versus lateral spines that injured urogenital and intestinal veins during the eggs passage with urine or with faeces resulting in haematuria and presence of blood in faeces, which will lead to anaemia. Double infection with *S. haematobium* and *S. mansoni* might be occurred, since both *S. mansoni* and *S. haematobium* eggs characterized by lateral and terminal spines were detected in the same urine of the patient at a private laboratory in Khartoum as described and published by Tongu *et al.*, 1990 and others²³.

In addition, textbooks of parasites describe that eggs of *S. mansoni* are found in the urine^{24, 25}. The eggs of *S. mansoni* may be found in the bladder in 7% of the patients when they are found in the rectum²⁶. In Sudan 3 to 5% of the patients of mixed schistosomiasis discharge eggs of both *S. haematobium* and *S. mansoni* in the urine²³. In this context, Cunin *et al.*, 2003 and others examined a total of 1118 pupils and found an infection prevalence of 70.5% for *S. haematobium* and 30.8% for *S. mansoni*. Unfortunately, *S. mansoni* eggs were found in 14.5% of the urine samples and *S. haematobium* eggs in 3% of the stool samples²⁷. Cercariae and adult worms live in the veins and feed on blood during their long life span and the terminal

verses lateral spins injure urogenital and intestinal veins during the eggs passage with urine or with faeces resulting in haematuria and presence of blood in faeces. The blood is a potential culturing medium for bacteria in the urinary tract and may enhance bacterial growth in bilharzia patients. This co-infection has been documented as potential risk factor in the incidence of squamous cancer of the bladder in later years and recent studies have implicated bacteriuria in bladder cancer since bacteria accelerate the multi-stage process of bladder carcinogenesis^{28, 29, 30, 31, 32}.

S. haematobium related haematuria, renal failure and bladder cancer lead to anaemia³³ in addition to the natural lifespan of blood feeding adult schistosome that takes around 5-10 years²⁰, the schistosomiasis becomes an aetiological factor of anaemia and malnutrition³⁴.

The consequent effects of anaemia and malnutrition on bilharzia patient health has uncovered that infection and malnutrition have always been intricately linked. There are extensive, synergistic, antagonistic, and cyclical interactions between malnutrition and infection^{35, 36}. Malnutrition is the primary cause of immunodeficiency worldwide and the worldwide magnitude of parasite infection is enormous³⁷. All studies about schistosomiasis showed that the schistosomiasis were associated with morbidities that relate to malnutrition and chronic inflammation³⁸. Schistosoma species can cause non-specific systemic morbidities with anaemia, malnutrition, and reduced childhood development³⁹ as a consequence of the effect of continued inflammation on normal growth, iron absorption, physical fitness, and cognitive occupation⁴⁰. Furthermost anaemia in patients with schistosomiasis is anaemia of inflammation, associated with blood loss (and high parasitic loads), that leads to total-body iron deficiency⁴¹. The anaemia of inflammation is affected by iron trapping within the body, facilitated by the hepatic

hormone hepcidin the relief of which is encouraged by infection-related making of the pro-inflammatory cytokine interleukin⁴². As a consequence of chronic anaemia, declined aerobic capacity negatively affects physical work production in regions prevalent for schistosomiasis⁴⁰. Reduced function marks and undernutrition in children are also significantly related with schistosomiasis⁴³.

CONCLUSIONS

Our result showed that number of growing bacteria in the *S. haematobium* positive samples was significantly more than number of growing bacteria in the *S. haematobium* negative samples. Schistosomiasis might enhance Bilharzia associated bacteriuria due to biology of Schistosoma species.

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