The current epidemiological status of soil-transmitted helminths schistosomiasis in Nigeria

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Soil-transmitted helminth infections (STH) and schistosomiasis are among the most prevalent chronic human infections worldwide and constitute major public health challenges among school age children in sub-Saharan Africa. Based on the demonstrable impact on child development, there is a global commitment to finance and implement control strategies with a focus on school-based chemotherapy programmes. In 2001, the World Health Assembly passed a resolution urging endemic member states to periodically deworm school age children with the aim of reducing global STH and schistosomiasis disease burden by treating 75% of children at risk of morbidity by 2010. Since the passage of the resolution, it appears that not much appreciable progress towards achieving this target has been made in Nigeria. Through a systematic review of the published literature using the Medline Entrez-Pubmed search, this paper examines the trend of the prevalence and intensity patterns of these two neglected tropical diseases for the past two and half decades (1990-2012) in different geographical locations in Nigeria with a view to show the progress made so far by the control programme in reducing the burden of these diseases among the vulnerable age group (i.e. pre-school and school age children) in Nigeria.

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