

**SOCIOLOGICAL FACTORS IN THE SPREAD OF  
*SCHISTOSOMIASIS MANSONI* IN MWEA AND GICHUGU  
DIVISIONS, KIRINYAGA DISTRICT, KENYA.**

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## ABSTRACT

This study was carried out in Mwea and Gichugu Divisions of Kirinyaga District, Central Kenya, where investigations on the prevalence and intensity of *Schistosoma mansoni* infection and the sociological factors that may be influencing its transmission were undertaken.

Stool examinations were performed on 387 pupils in standard 3,4,5 and 6 from Ndorome and Gicatha Primary Schools in Mwea and Gichugu Divisions respectively. The prevalence of the disease in Ndorome was 81.2% and the mean egg output was 210.8 eggs per gram of faeces, whereas the corresponding values for Gicatha were 11.5% and 27.7 eggs per gram. The differences in prevalence and intensity between the two schools were highly significant.

Sociological data were obtained by structured questionnaires filled through questioning 100 pupils and their parents of the same number (50 pupils and their parents in each school). The rate of *S. mansoni* infection was higher in pupils from families headed by peasant farmers, in pupils living in houses with poor construction (mud houses) and from those whose families were headed by uneducated parents, as well as, in those who depend on the stream as their sole source of water.

These results indicate that the danger of the spread of *S. mansoni* infection to Gichugu division is real, and secondly, that the provision of piped water coupled with extensive health education might decrease the transmission of the disease in those areas.