

Haemoparasites of Bovine Species Slaughtered In Port Harcourt Metropololis, Rivers State, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

Background: The haemoparasitemia of cattle slaughtered in three abattoirs in Port Harcourt metropolis, Rivers State, Nigeria were determined in the department of Animal an Environmental Biology parasitology research laboratory in the University of Port Harcourt between the months of July and September, 2016.

Methods: One hundred and five (105) blood samples were obtained from healthy Sokoto Gudali breed of cattle from three abattoirs (Trans-Amadi, Rumuokoro and Eastern-by-Pass) and were processed for microscopic examination. Giemsa Stained thick and thin smear preparations of the samples were examined.

Results: An overall parasitemia of 11.43% accounting for 12 positive cattle out of 105 cattle examined was obtained. Abattoir specific prevalence indicated 5.71%, 3.81% and 1.90% for Trans-Amadi, Rumuokoro and Eastern-by-Pass respectively. The three species of parasites identified showed that *Anaplasma* spp., *Theileria* spp. and *Babesia* spp. recorded a prevalence of 5.71%, 3.81% and 1.90% respectively. Sex related parasitemia showed that females had higher prevalence of 6.67% than males (4.76%) which was statistically significant ($P < 0.05$). Age related prevalence showed that older cattle recorded higher prevalence of 12.72% than the younger ones (10.00%), which was not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). The study showed a higher prevalence of haemoparasites in slaughtered cattle at Trans-Amadi followed by Rumuokoro and Eastern-by-Pass slaughter respectively.

Conclusion: The study provides information on the haemoparasites status of cattle slaughtered in Port-Harcourt metropolis. Ectoparasites are known to be the primary vectors to haemoparasites therefore, level of ectoparasites should be controlled and management practices should be improved upon in order to maximize wholesome beef for the general populace.

Keywords: *Haemoparasites*; cattle; abattoirs; Port Harcourt

1. INTRODUCTION

The Nigerian livestock population was estimated at about 50 million apart from pigs, rabbits and guinea pigs [1]. The value of Nigeria livestock resource in monetary terms was estimated to be \$6 billion. Nigeria livestock population; cattle contributed about 10%. This in monetary terms accounted for about 40% of the total livestock revenue of Nigeria [2]. Haemoparasitic infestations have a global distribution, stretching from the polar circle to the equator. This is due to the fact that their vectors- ticks and blood sucking flies also have a global distribution.

Cattle, sheep and goats in sub-saharan African may be infected with a wide variety of parasites. Most importantly vector-borne haemoparasites such as *Anaplasma*, *Theileria*, *Babesia* and bovine trypanosome have been observed [3; 4]. The tropical environment is for various reasons suitable for the development of these parasitic diseases [5].

Outbreak of protozoan disease may occur if cattle are moved from humid area to semi-arid region where the vectors are prevalent. Haemoparasites have generally been shown to cause lysis of red blood cells resulting in anaemia, jaundice, anorexia, loss of weight and infertility [6]. This parasitic diseases have weakening effect on human and animal health worldwide especially in developing countries [7]. Babesiosis, an haemoparasitic disease imposes a serious burden on the healthcare infrastructure of both the cattle and their handlers(8)

Cattle are very important economically because they are source of animal protein and income. Their by-products such as hoof, bones, blood, hides and skin are also variously used [9]. Beef is the third most widely consumed meat in the world, accounting for about 25% of meat production worldwide, after pork and poultry at 38% and 30% respectively [10 ;11]. Beef is an excellent source of complete protein. Minerals such as zinc, selenium phosphorus and iron and the B vitamins are also present. Haemoparasitic infestations are major public health, veterinary and socio-economic problem in Africa, where they impose a burden on the health care infrastructure of both animals and animal handlers in endemic area.

Studies carried out on the haemoparasitic infestations of cattle reported a prevalence of 3.9% in Ebonyi State(12). Study conducted among 180 cattle in Oyo state reported a prevalence of 6.67%(13) . Benue state, reported a prevalence rate of 28.9% in a study investigated among 637 cattle [14]. Infestations in North-central Nigeria recorded 25.7% prevalence(15) .

The Sokoto gudali breed is a short-horned and short-legged animal. They are also known as the Zebu in West and Central Africa. Gudali originated from Persia gulf and south Arabia. Arabia invaders spread the Zebu to the South from 669BC [16]. The breed is also known as Yola gudali, Adamawa gudali and Ngaundere gudali. The Sokoto gudali is the strain mostly found in Nigeria, Northern Benin, Ghana and Mali, They have multiple coat colour although the most common one is black and white which has a deeper body than the white Fulani breed [17].

About 90% of the Sokoto gudali cattle are owned and managed by Fulani and Hausa pastoralist and trans humant herders [18], who feed their cattle on communally owned grazing lands and browse especially in the dry season [17]. They are known for their hardiness to the Arid Northernly environment. The cattle are known for their meat and milk. Mature weights range from 495-660kg for males and 240-355kg for females. They are also known for their beef quality among indigenous breed.

Inspite of several studies that have been conducted on the haemoparasitic infestations of cattle in parts of Nigeria; there is little or no information on the haemoparasitic infections in Port Harcourt metropolis.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

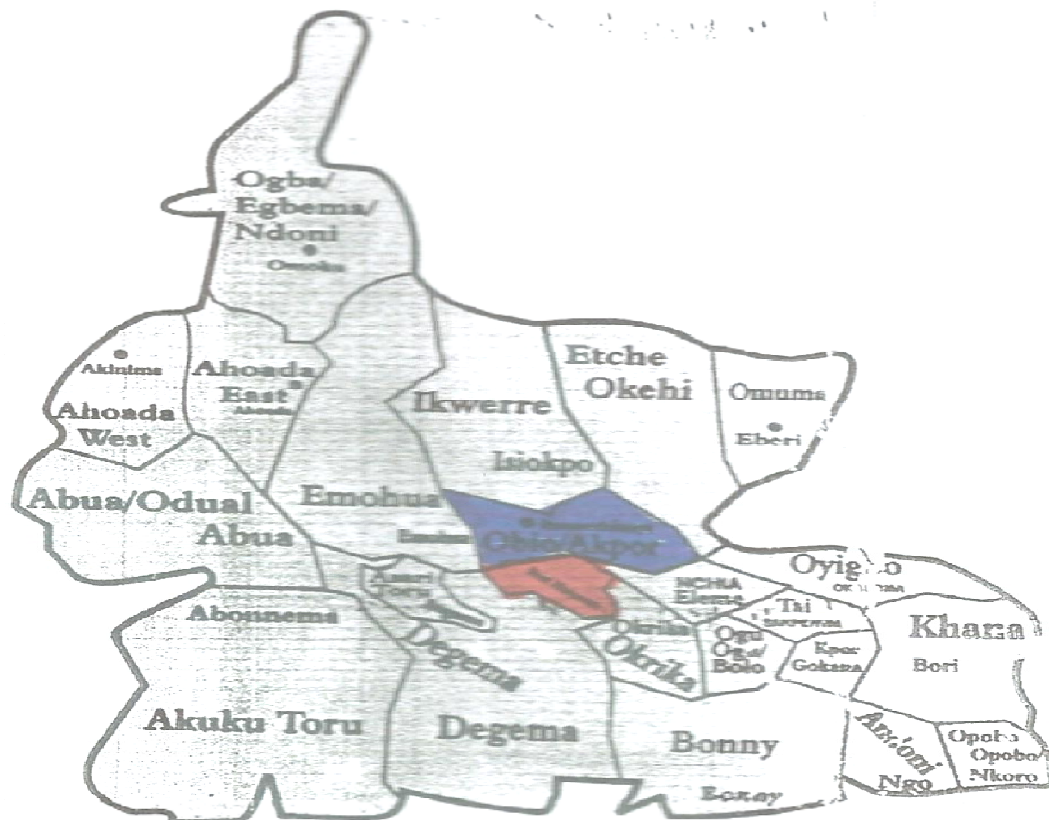
2.1. Study Area

The study was carried out at three selected abattoirs in Port Harcourt metropolis, the capital of Rivers State of Nigeria. The study areas include; Trans-Amadi, Eastern-By-Pass Rumuokoro abattoirs respectively. Trans-Amadi abattoir is the biggest abattoir in Rivers State with an average daily slaughter of 50-60 cattle. Trans-Amadi is a thousand hectare (2,500 acre) industrial area, as well as a diverse residential neighbourhood in the city of Port Harcourt; situated at 4° 48' 53" N latitude and 7° 2' 14" E longitude. Trans-Amadi lies in the North and is bordered by D/line in the South West, Woji Township to the East and Rumuola to the North West.

Rumuokoro is a town in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria, situated at 4°45'N latitude and 6°50'E longitude. It is the meeting points of five major roads in Nigeria economy and the gate way to and from the city of Port Harcourt. It consists of five communities; Rukpoakwolusi, Eligbolo, Awalema, Rumuagholu and Elieke.

Eastern-by-pass slaughter on the other hand, is located in Port Harcourt city which is the capital of Rivers State and the largest city, made up of the Local Government Area itself and part of Obio-Akpor, situated at 4°32'N latitude and 7°42'E longitude.

Port Harcourt Local Government Area covers 109km² and at 2016 census held a population of 3,100,000. Although the majority of the inhabitants live in rural agricultural and riverine areas and engage in peasant agriculture and fishing, the State's reputation as the treasure base of the nation is because of its abundance in oil resources.



Map 1: Map of Rivers State showing the study area (Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Areas)

Obio/Akpor Local Government Area

Port Harcourt Local Government Area

2.2. Collection of Blood Samples

Ethical considerations.

Ethical clearance was sought from the ethical committee of Rivers state. Consent of each participant was sought and obtained without struggle having been briefed on the advantages of the research outcome.

Blood samples were randomly collected aseptically from 105 apparently healthy cattle of both sexes of Sokoto gudali breed. The blood samples from each animal was put in an Ethy-lene diaminetetracetic acid (EDTA) tube which was appropriately labeled and placed in an ice pack. The blood samples were sent to the department of Animal and Environmental Biology Parasitology research laboratory in the University of Port-Harcourt for analysis within five hours of collection. The blood samples were collected for a period of 10 weeks between 13th July and 28th September, 2016.

2.3 Examination of Blood Samples

2.3.1 Preparation of Thick Blood Smear(For general observation)

A large drop of blood was taken into a grease free glass slide and was spread on an area of 12mm square with another slide and then allowed to thoroughly air-dry. The thick smear was thereafter stained with 10% Giemsa stain for 25-30 minutes. The stain was washed off from staining rack with clean water by flushing the stain from slides. These were placed in a draining rack to air-dry [18]. When the thick film was completely dried, a drop of immersion oil was applied to an area of the film and the oil was spread to cover the film and examined first at a lower magnification and then with x 100 objective of the microscope.

2.3.2 Preparation of Thin Blood Film

This technique was prepared by dropping a pin head of blood on a grease free glass slide. The edge of a glass spreader was placed on the drop of blood at an angle of 45⁰ and pushed gently and swiftly forward until a thin film with a staggered tail is produced. This was allowed to air dry at room temperature. The air dried blood smear was fixed in 100% methanol and stained with 10% Giemsa stain. This was immediately rinsed in buffered water and allowed to dry on a staining rack [18]. The stained blood smears were examined using the x 100 oil immersion objective. The identification of the parasites is based upon morphological forms and structures within the Giemsa stained blood film.(identification was not done to spp. level)

2.4 DATA ANALYSIS

The prevalence rates among sex and age of the animals were expressed as percentage of the total numbers of animals sampled. Chi-square test was used to evaluate relationships between the prevalence of the disease, sex and age of the cattle studied. A p-value of p= .05 was considered significant.

148

149

3. RESULTS

The study revealed that out of 105 blood samples examined, a total of 12 (11.43%) samples were positive for haemoparasites. Abattoir-specific prevalence is as follows; 6(5.71%), 4(3.81%) and 2(1.90%) animals infected for Trans-Amadi, Rumuokoro, and Eastern-by-pass abattoirs respectively as in table 1 and Fig. 1.

The distribution of the parasites based on age indicated were 5(10%) as follows; 3 (6.00%), 1 (2.0%) and 1 (2.00%) of the younger cattle in Trans-Amadi, Rumuokoro and Eastern-by-pass abattoirs respectively. Older cattle had 7(12.73%) parasites as follows; 4(7.27%), 2(3.64%) and 1 (1.82%) respectively for Trans-Amadi, Rumuokoro and Eastern-by-pass abattoirs (Table 2 and Fig. 2).

During the study, 12 (11.43%) of the cattle were positive for haemoparasites as follows; 5(4.76%), 7(6.67%) for male and females respectively (Table 3 and Fig.3).

Twelve haemoparasites of three genera were identified during the study as follows; 6 (5.71%), 4 (3.81%) and 2 (1.90%) for *Anaplasma* spp., *Theileria* spp., and *Babesia* spp respectively. *Anaplasma* spp. showed a prevalence of 3 (2.86%), 2 (1.90%) and 1 (0.95%) at Trans-Amadi, Rumuokoro and Eastern-by-pass abattoirs respectively. *Theileria* spp. showed a prevalence of 2 (1.90%), 1(0.95%) and 1 (0.95) at Trans-Amadi, Rumuokoro and Eastern-by-pass abattoirs. While *Babesia* spp. showed a prevalence of 1(0.95%) at both Trans-Amadi and Rumuokoro abattoirs. There was no record of *Babesia* spp at Eastern-by-pass abattoir (table 4).

Table 1: Prevalence of haemoparasites based on study location (Abattoir specific prevalence)

Abattoir	No. examined	No. Infected (%)
Trans-Amadi	45	6 (5.71)
Rumuokoro	30	4(3.81)
Eastern-by-pass	30	2(1.90)
Total	105	12(11.43)

($\chi^2 = 5.99$, df = 2, $p > 0.05$)

Table 2: Prevalence of haemoparasites based on age

Younger Cattle			Older Cattle	
Location	No. Examined	No. Infected (%)	No. Examined	No. Infected (%)
Trans-Amadi	20	3(6.00)	25	4(7.27)
Rumuokoro	15	1(2.00)	15	2(3.64)
Eastern-by-pass	15	1(2.00)	15	1(1.82)
Total	50	5(10.00)	55	7(12.73)

Age ($\chi^2 = 3.84$, df = 1, $p > 0.05$)

Table 3:

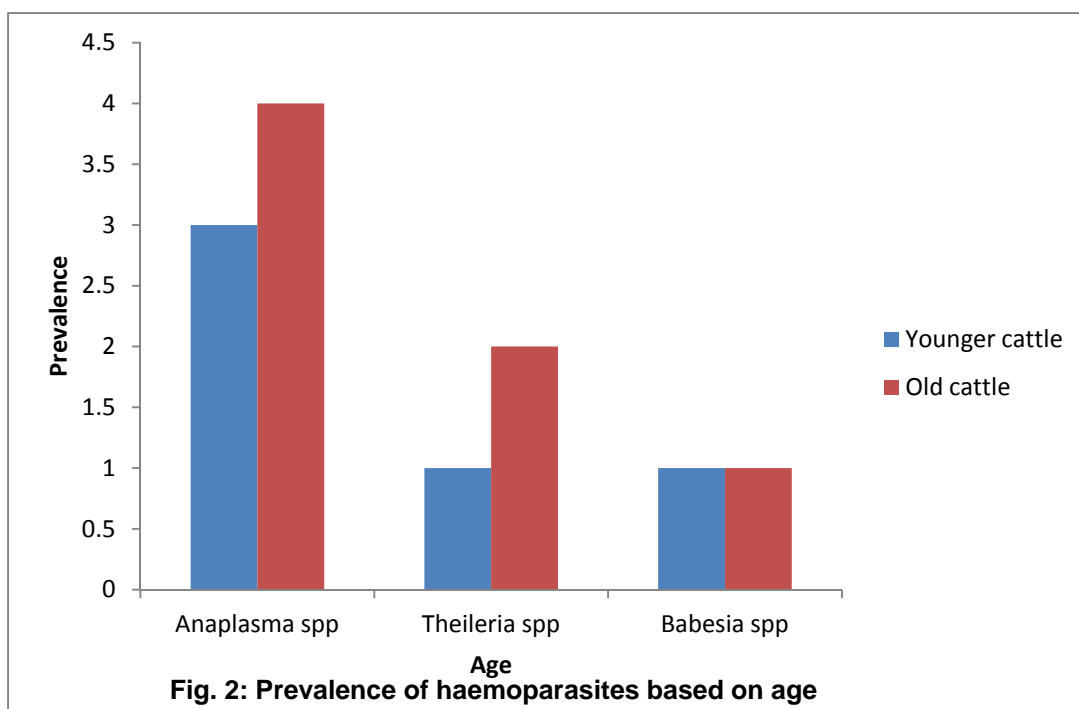
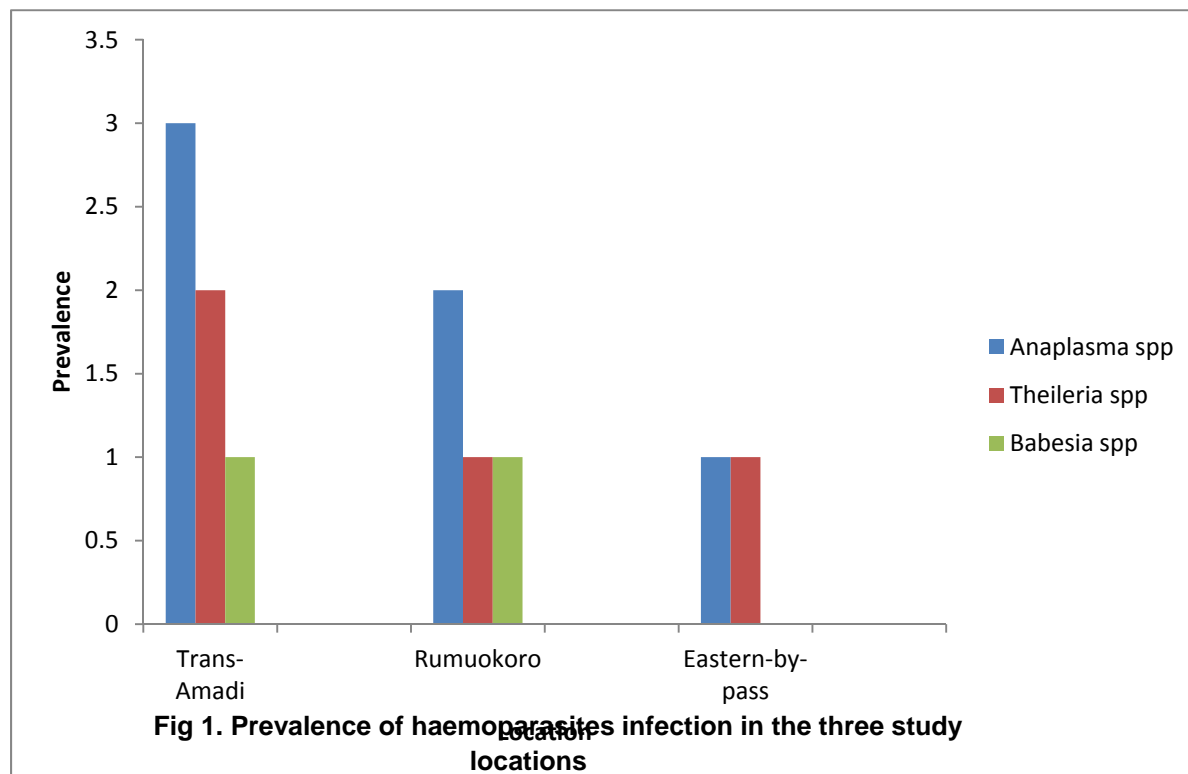
Prevalence of haemoparasites based on sex

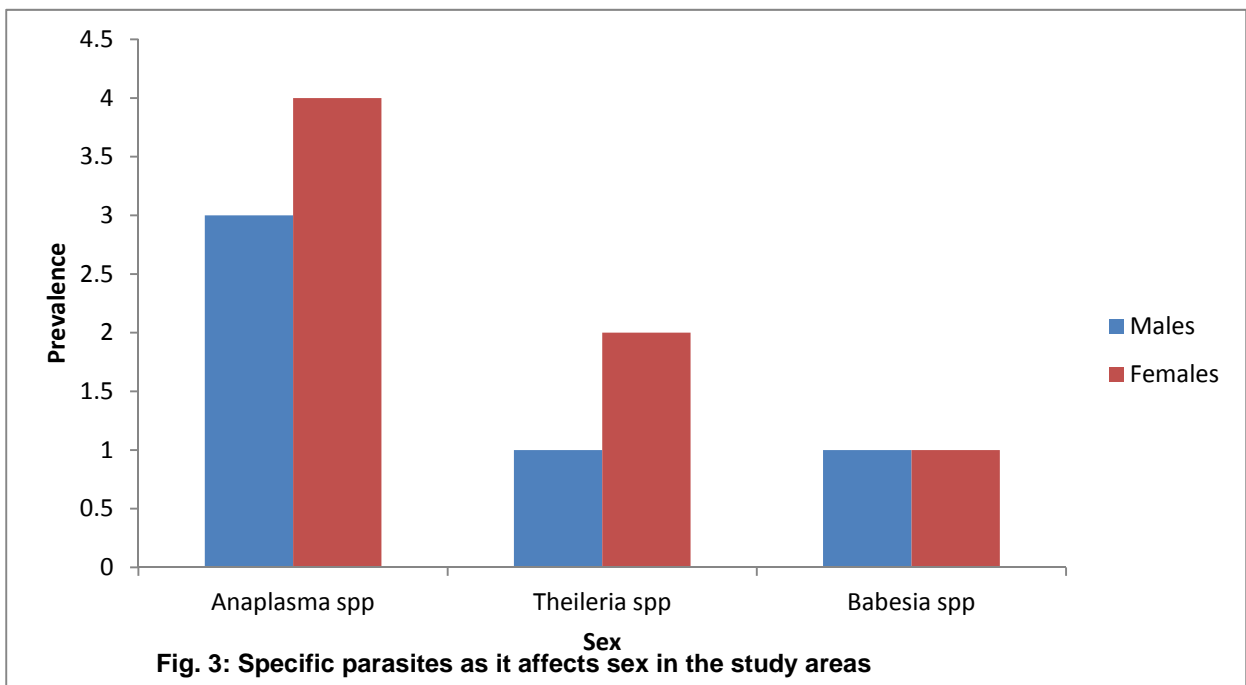
Sex	No. Examined	No. Infected (%)
Males	70	5(4.76)
Females	35	7(6.67)
Total	105	12(11.43)

Sex ($\chi^2 = 3.84$, df = 1, $p < 0.05$)

Table 4: Prevalence of haemoparasites infection in the three study locations

Parasites	Trans-Amadi Abattoir TVC (%)	Rummokoro Abattoir TVC (%)	Easter-by-pass Abattoir TVC (%)	Total
Anaplasma spp.	3(2.86)	2(1.90)	1(0.95)	6(5.71)
Theileria spp.	2(1.90)	1(0.95)	1(0.95)	4(3.81)
Babesia spp.	1(0.95)	1(0.95)	-	2(1.90)
Total	6(5.71)	4(3.81)	2(1.90)	12(11.43)





The present study confirms the reports of previous studies on the range of haemoparasites found in cattle in Nigeria.(20; 21; 22; 23) The infection rate of 11.43% by haemoparasites reported in this study suggests a continuous challenge by parasites and the existence of carrier state in most animals. The haemoparasitemia reported in this study indicated that parasitism is one of the major challenges that hinder cattle production in Port Harcourt metropolis.

The high parasitemia reported in this study could probably be as a result of poor sanitary condition, nutritional challenges and lack of routine treatment .*Anaplasma* spp. (5.71%) accounted for most of the parasites seen followed by *Theileria* spp. (3.81) and *Babesia* spp. (1.90%). This is in contrast with the work of Bell-Sakyi *etal.*, 2004 [3] who observed a reverse trend in a survey conducted in livestock in Ghana. The observed 5.71% parasitemia for anaplasmosis was lower than the 9.9% reported by by Zawua *etal.*, 2015 [14] in Benue State, Nigeria. The low prevalence recorded in the study could be attributed to the improvement in husbandry system, better veterinary care and climate change; contrary to the report of higher prevalence (28.9%) of parasitemia in cattle in Gboko metropolis of Benue State, Nigeria. *Theileria* spp. showed occurrence of 3.81%, which was similar to the earlier work of Kamani *etal.*, 2010 [15] in North central Nigeria. The low parasitemia observed in *Babesia* spp. (1.90%) contradicts earlier studies by Kamani *etal.*, 2010 [15] where 16% prevalence in cattle in Nigeria was reported. The lower parasitemia observed in *Babesia* spp. and *Anaplasma* spp. may be associated with difference in sample number. However, Agu *etal.*, 2001 [12] showed that fatal infection of the parasites could occur in nutritionally challenged breed and poor sanitary condition that promote vector abundance. The prevalence of parasitemia was higher in females than male animals possibly due to the fact that females are kept much longer for breeding and milk production purposes [14] The lower prevalence in young animals compared to adults can be attributed to restricted grazing of young animals which tends to reduce their chances of contact with the vectors of these diseases. [15].

5. CONCLUSION

The result of this study clearly shows that 11.43% of the cattle slaughtered in the study area were infected with haemoparasites. This is one of the challenges that hamper cattle production in Port-Harcourt metropolis and elsewhere. The effect is usually manifested in production losses, late maturity, weight loss, still birth and increased susceptibility to other diseases.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

REFERENCES

1. Bourn, D. Wint, Blench, R. Woolley, E (2007). Nigerian Livestock resources survey. *World Animal Review*. 78 (1): 49-58
2. McIntyre, J.D., Bourzat, D, Pingal, P (2013). Crop-livestock interaction in sub-saharan African Regional World Bank, Washington, D.C.
3. Bell- Sakyi L., Koney E.B.M., Dogbey O., Walker A.R. (2004): Incidence and prevalence of tick-borne haemoparasites in domestic ruminants in Ghana. *Veterinary Parasitology*. 124 (1-2): 25-42.
4. Okaiyeto S.O., Tekdek L.B., Sackey A.K.B., Ajanusi O.J. (2008) Prevalence of Haemo and gastrointestinal parasites in sheep and goats kept by the Normadic Fulanis in some Northern States of Nigeria. *Res .J. Animal Science* 2(2), 31-33.
5. Payne W.J.A. (2014): An introduction to Animal Husbandry in the Tropics (4th edition), ELBS
6. Akande F.A, Taket M.I, Makanju O.A (2010): Haemoparasites of cattle in Abeokuta, South West Nigeria. *Sci. World J*. 5(4), 9-21.
7. Ellis J. T, Morrison D. A., Reichel M. P., (2003): geonomics and its impact on parasite control methods. *DNA cell bio*. 32, 395- 403
8. Sam-wobo, S.O, Uyigue, J, Surakat, A.O ;Adekunle, N.O and Mogaji, H.O (2016)
Babesiosis and other Heamoparasitic Diseases in a cattle slaughtering Abattoir in Abeokuta, Nigeria
International journal of tropical disease 18(2) 1-5.
9. Sunsoucy, R. (2000). Livestock: a driving-force for food security and sustainable development. *World animal review*, 84/85: 517
10. Dreyer, K., Fourice, L.J. and Kok, D.J. (2008). Ticks diversity, Abundance and Seasonal Dynamics in a Resource Poor Urban environment in the Free State province. *Onderstepoort Journal of Veterinary Research* 65:305-316.
11. Dold, A.P. and Cocks, M.L. (2001). Traditional Veterinary Medicine in the Alice District of the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. *South African Journal of Science*, 97 (9-10): 375-379.
12. Agu WE, Amadi IN (2001). Trypanosomosis of small ruminants (sheep and goats) and cattle in Abakeliki of Ebonye state, Nigeria. *Tropical veterinary parasitology*, 19(2)1-8
13. Okorafor, U.P. and Nzcako, S.O. (2014). Prevalence of haemoparasites of cattle from three abattoirs in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State Nigeria. *International Journal of Science*, 2(7), pp. 244-2499.
14. Zawua, T.P., Amadi, O., Amuta, E.U. and Sar, T.T. (2015) Haemoparasites of cattle slaughteres for sale within Gboko Metropolis of benue State, Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Parasitology*. ISSN 11174145 Volume 36(1) March 2015.
15. Kamani, J. Sanusi, A., Egwu O.K and Dodo G.I. 2010. Prevalence and Significance of Haemoparasitic infections of Cattle in North-Central Nigeria. *Veterinary World*, Vol. 3(10): 445-448.
16. DAGRIS, 2005. Domestic Animal Genetic Resources Information System (DAGRIS). S. Kemp, (Y. Mamo, B. Abstract and T. Dessie). International Livestock Research Institute, Ababa, Ethiopia.
17. Tawah C.L. and Rege J.E.O. 1996. Gudali Cattle of West and Central Africa. *FAO Animal Genetic Resources Information Bulletin*. 17:159-170.

- 334 18. Ngere, L.O. 1985. The Gudali OF Nigeria – Review. Animal Genetic Resources In Africa – High
335 potential and endangered livestock. Proceedings of 2nd OAU Expert Committee Meeting, 24-28
336 November 1983, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, pp. 77-81.
337
- 338 19. Cheesbrough, M . (2006). Giemsa staining technique district laboratory practice in tropical countries,
339 part I. Cambridge university press. U.K p.p. 248
340
- 341 20. Ajayi, S.A., J.P.fabiyi and I.Umo (1983): clinical Anaplasmosis and Babesiosis in friesian cattle. *World*
342 *animal review*, 36,68.
343
344
- 345 21. Enwezor FNC. Umoh JU, Esievo KAN, Halid I. Zaria LT., Anere JI (2009). Survey of Bovine
346 Trypanosomosis in the Kachia Grazing Reserve, Kaduna State, Nigeria. *Veterinary parasitology*, 159:
347 121-125.
348
349
- 350 22. Obi T.U and V.O Anosa (2010). Haematological Studies and Domestic animals in Nigeria IV
351 Clinicolohaematological features of Bovine Trypanosomiasis, Theileriasis, anaplasmosis,
352 Eperythrozoonosis and Helminthiasis, Ziblatt *Vet. Med. B27* pp. 789-797
353
354
- 355 23. Leeflang P. and A.A. Ilemobade, (2010). Tick Borne Diseases of Domestic Animals in Northern Nigeria
356 II. Research Summary. 1966-1976. *Trop. Anim. Hlth. Prod.* 9, pp. 211-218.