



International Conference and Exhibition on

VIROLOGY

5-7 September 2011 Baltimore, USA

Seroprevalence of *Toxoplasma gondii* infection among people living with HIV/AIDS in Keffi, Nigeria

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Infection by the protozoan *Toxoplasma gondii* is a major public health problem especially in immune compromised individuals. It leads to life threatening conditions like cerebral toxoplasmosis which is the second cause of death in such patients. There is paucity of information on the prevalence of this infection among people living with HIV/AIDS in Nigeria. This study was a preliminary investigation of the prevalence of the infection and some possible risk factors. One hundred and eighty four HIV/AIDS patients aged 10-59 years were recruited and screened for *Toxoplasma gondii* IgG using Toxo IgG ELISA Kit (Clinotech Laboratories and Pharmaceuticals Canada) according to the manufacturer's instructions. An ethical clearance for the study was obtained from the ethical committee of the Federal Medical Center Keffi. The prevalence of latent infection in the study population was evidenced by seropositivity of anti-*Toxoplasma* IgG among 17.4% (32/184) of them. Patients aged 10-19 years had the highest prevalence (27.3%) and overall, more males were infected (28.8%) than females (12.9%) ($P < 0.05$). Most of those infected (78.1%) had a CD4+ cell counts below 400 ($P < 0.05$). Results of this study suggest that exposure to the protozoan exists in Nigeria. While gender and CD4+ cell counts were reported as possible risk factors for infection, age did not show any significant association with it. The outcome of this study calls for the necessity to create awareness of this diseases in Nigeria and also advocate for protection of people living with HIV/AIDS from exposure to the protozoan.

Biography

Grace Rinmecit Pennap holds a PhD from Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria in Public Health and Preventive Medicine. She is a senior lecturer in Microbiology at Nasarawa State University Keffi. She has published more than 20 papers in both local and international journals. Her main research area is viral epidemiology.