

3 **Growth status and Parasitic Fauna in Intestines, Gills and Skins of**  
4 ***Clariasgariiepinus* Collected from Ogbese River and Owena River, South-**  
5 **West Nigeria**  
6  
7

8 **ABSTRACT**

9 The study aimed to determine condition status and identify parasitic fauna in intestine, gills  
10 and skins of *Clariasgariiepinus* collected from two natural waters: Ogbese River (River  
11 A) (Longitude 5°26'E' and Latitude 6°43'N), and Owena River (River B) (Longitude 5.03E and  
12 Latitude 7.03N) in Ondo state, Nigeria respectively. A total of 120 live *C. gariepinus* African  
13 Mud Catfish were collected by the assistance of fishermen using cast net during wet season  
14 during April to July, 2016 from the two natural water bodies. The fish were transported live to  
15 the laboratory for examinations. Length (cm) and weight (g) measurement of fish were  
16 determined. Condition factor (K), isometric value (b) and regression coefficient were  
17 determined. Fish samples were examined using electronic Microscope (x 40 Mag.) by  
18 dissecting fish to remove organs (Intestines, gills and skins) for parasites occurrence (s).  
19 Descriptive and analytical statistics were used to analyse the data obtained. The condition  
20 factor for all *C. gariepinus* samples collected from both Rivers were less than one (<1), which  
21 indicated that health status of the fish is biased, and environment is not conducive. Parasitic  
22 examination carried out revealed that seventy-eight (65%) *C. gariepinus* fish samples were  
23 infested; while 42 (35 %) of fish samples showed no parasite infestation. A total of Ninety-six  
24 (96) individual parasites were recovered from River A while a total of two hundred and  
25 twelve (212) individual parasites were recovered from River B. A total of eight (8) different  
26 parasites species were recovered while their percentage of occurrence were recorded. These  
27 include *Ambiphryaspp* (4.17%), *Camallanus spp* (6.25%; 2.83%), *Capillariaspp* (16.98%),  
28 *Chilodonellaspp* (14.58%), *Dactylogyrus spp* (64.58%; 5.66%), *Diphyllobothrium latum*  
29 (10.42%; 4.72%), *Gyrodactylus spp* (61.32%) and *Protoopalinasymphysodonis* (8.49%). The  
30 water bodies need to be protected against further pollutants to prevent disease condition for  
31 benefit of aquatic organisms and public health.

32 **Keywords:** Parasitic Occurrences, Growth status, *Clariasgariiepinus* organs, Natural waters.  
33  
34

35 **1. INTRODUCTION**

36 Fish is one of the most important food and is valued for its nutritional qualities  
37 (Onyiaet. al., 2013). It is one of the important sources of protein for humans and other

38 animals in the tropics (Biu and Akorede, 2013). Fish is a good source of high quality and  
39 easily digestible protein containing essential amino acids and other beneficial nutrients  
40 (Onyiaet. al., 2013) required for good health: it provides a good source of vitamins and  
41 minerals (Onyiaet. al., 2013). Fish serve as a good source of animal protein for man and his  
42 livestock (Bichi and Yelwa, 2010). Fish not only provides food for immediate consumption  
43 but people rely on fishing for economic gains and jobs (Biu and Akorede, 2013). A well-  
44 processed fish product from the tropics has a ready market in developed countries and is  
45 therefore a good foreign earner (Imam and Dewu, 2010). The most common fish available in  
46 Nigeria are the catfish species (e.g. *Clarias spp.*). The sharp mouth catfish,  
47 *Clariasgariepinus*(Burchell, 1822) occurs mainly in quiet waters, lakes and pools but may  
48 also occur in fast flowing rivers (Ayanda, 2009). It is highly priced in Nigeria either as  
49 smoked, dried or fresh (Imam and Dewu, 2010).

50 The study of parasites of freshwater fishes in Africa is sporadic and inadequate considering  
51 the fish health of the continent (Ajala and Fawole, 2014). Studies in Africa vary considerably  
52 from area to area and the parasites are mostly mentioned, as part of the fulfilment of the  
53 biology of the host fish species (Ajala and Fawole, 2014).Parasites are a major concern to  
54 freshwater and marine fishes all over the world, and of particular importance in the  
55 tropics (Bichi and Dawaki, 2010; Ekanemet. al.,2011). The effects of parasites on fish  
56 include nutrient devaluation (Hassan et. al.,2010); lowering of immune capability,  
57 induction of blindness and mechanical injuries depending on the parasite species and  
58 load (Echiet. al.,2009 a, b). Parasites may induce a shift in fish species densities, size,  
59 composition and affect commercially relevant stocks. Parasites are also good indicators of  
60 environmental contaminants and stress (Palm, 2011).

61 Parasitic diseases of fish are most frequently caused by small microscopic organisms called  
62 protozoa which live in the aquatic environment. There are varieties of protozoans which  
63 infest the gills and skin of fish causing irritation, weight loss, and eventually death. Most  
64 protozoan infections are relatively easy to control using standard fishery chemicals such as  
65 copper sulphate, formalin, or potassium permanganate etc. Protozoans are the most  
66 commonly encountered fish parasites (Klinger and Floyd, 2013). Protozoans are single-celled  
67 organisms, many of which are free-living in the aquatic environment (Klinger and Floyd,  
68 2013). They typically have a direct life cycle, that is, no intermediate host is required for the  
69 parasites to reproduce (Klinger and Floyd, 2013).

70 Fish like any other valuable natural resources, require careful management.Inspite of the  
71 interest in the freshwater ichthyofauna of Nigeria, little or no attempt is made to identify and  
72 manage or control parasites. As at present, the paucity of research in fish diseases in Africa is  
73 not seen as a factor that will have negative impact on fisheries development and as such is not  
74 a target research area. However, occurrences of helminth parasites in fishes have been studied  
75 extensively in various water bodies in Nigeria, with most of the work done primarily from the  
76 morphologic and morphometric descriptions, but factors that may limit the ability of parasites  
77 to co-exist in multiple infections in a host fish species had in most studies been neglected  
78 (Ajalaet. al., 2014).

79 In Nigeria, the emanating need to culture fishes for protein consumption for the rapidly  
80 growing populations have made it necessary to intensify studies on the parasitic fauna of the  
81 African freshwater fishes (*Clariasgariepinus*); and if these parasites are left uncurtailed, they  
82 may lead to mass mortality of fish, or in some cases, emergence of zoonotic species (Ajala  
83 and Fawole, 2014). The study of parasites in fishery resource management is of paramount  
84 importance. Hence, there is need to provide a deeper appreciation for the role of parasites in  
85 fish health assessments using *Clariasgariepinus* collected from two different natural water  
86 bodies. Therefore, this study was designed to investigate and identify the parasitic fauna in  
87 the intestine, on the gills and skin of adult *Clariasgariepinus* from two natural waters in Ondo  
88 State, Nigeria.

89

## 90 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

### 91 2.1 Study area

92 This study was conducted in Ogbese River (A) which lies between Longitude 5°26'E' and  
93 Latitude 6°43'N; and Owena River (B) which lies between Latitude 7.03N Longitude 5.03E.  
94 Ogbese River is one of the major perennial rivers in South-Western Nigeria and it took its  
95 source from Awo-Ekiti in Ekiti State. Owena River is also perennial in nature, and is used as a  
96 major source of domestic water supply to the people of Ondo and Akure townships. It has a  
97 surface area of about 15Km<sup>2</sup>.

### 98 2.2 Sample collection

99 A total of one hundred and twenty (120) live *Clariasgariepinus* fishes were collected by the  
100 assistance of fishermen from Ogbese and Owena Rivers in Ondo state during April to July,  
101 2016. Fish samples were transported during the early hours (9:00hours-10:00hours) of the  
102 day in sanitized plastic container (25 litres) with water from respected River source to  
103 Fisheries laboratory, Federal University of Technology, Akure, where growth assessments  
104 and parasitological examination were carried out.

105

106

#### 107 2.2.1 Growth Parameters Assessment

108 • Measurement of standard length (cm) was taken using graduated meter rule while  
109 weight (g) of fish were taken using electronic scale (Mettler Toledo electronic  
110 weighing balance (PB8001)).

111 • Condition factor (K) of the fish were determined to evaluate the health status of the  
112 fish in relation to its environment using:

113 
$$K = 100W / L^3 \dots\dots\dots(\text{Abowei, 2009}).$$

114 Where:

115 K = The Condition factor

116 W = Weight of fish in grams (g)  
117 L = Standard length of fish in centimetres (cm)  
118

119 • Regression analysis was carried out to assesses the relationship between increase in  
120 length with weight gain of the fish using:

121  $W=aL^b$  ..... Equation 1 (Leonard *et. al.*, 2012)

122 Where:

123 W=Weight of fish in grams (g)

124 L= Total Length (TL) of fish in centimetres

125 a= Scaling Constant

126 b= Allometric growth coefficient

127 The “a” and “b” values were obtained from a linear regression of the length and  
128 weight of fish.

129 Transformed equation into linear regression:

130  $\text{Log } W = \text{Log } a + b \text{ Log } L$  ..... Equation 2 (Dan-Kishiya, 2013)

131 The regression coefficient ( $R^2$ ) correlation coefficient of the fish were determined.

132

### 133 2.3 Sex grouping

134 *Clarias gariepinus* samples collected from Ogbese River and Owena River were sepereted into  
135 male and female respectively.

### 136 2.4 Parasitological study

137 *Clarias gariepinus* fish samples were dissected, and the body cavities were opened with the  
138 aid of a dissecting set. The fish wer examined for endoparasites and ectoparasites using  
139 microscopic technique (direct wet mounts using Giesma staining method).

140 The skin, intestine and gills of the fish samples were dissected and a gram specimen of each  
141 organ were cut to make a squash with a mixture of 1 gram Nacl and 10 ml distilled water. A  
142 drop of this was placed on the cavity slide with a syringe and viewed under Olympus  
143 trinocular microscope (CX 40) mounted with microphotograph (Scope image). The parasites  
144 observed were counted, identified and recorded. Degree of parasitic infection in intestine,  
145 gills and skin of *Clarias gariepinus* collected from the rivers were observed and recorded.

### 146 2.5 Statistical analysis

147 Data were subjected to statistical analysis using Software Package Social Sciences (SPSS  
148 Version 6.0). Analytical and descriptive statistics were engaged to analyse data collected.  
149 Furtheranalysis was carried out using Duncan Multiple Range Test. mean and standard  
150 deviation (Mean  $\pm$  Standard Deviation) of data were determined. Regression analysis were  
151 carried out and correlation (r) for respective data on growth were determined.

152 The condition factor (K) was calculated using the appropriate statistical formula given below:

153  $K = \frac{W \times 100}{L^3}$   
 154  $L^3$   
 155  
 156 K= The Condition factor  
 157 W= Weight (g) of fish  
 158 L= Total Length (cm) of fish

159

### 160 3. RESULTS

#### 161 3.1 Growth Parameters Determinations

##### 162 3.1.1 Length and Weight Measurements

163 A total of 120 *Clarias gariepinus* collected from Ogbese River and Owena River indicated  
 164 length range from 22.90 – 34.40 cm and weight range 133.5 - 332.4 g. Table 1 shows mean  
 165 and standard deviation of standard length (cm) and weight (g) of fish samples collected over  
 166 four months.

167

168 **Table 1: Mean and standard deviation Length (cm) and Weight (g)**  
 169 ***Clarias gariepinus* collected from Ogbese River and Owena River**

	Weight (g)	Standard length (cm)
<b>Ogbese River</b>		
April	201.00 ± 16.72 <sup>c</sup>	27.89 ± 2.58 <sup>a</sup>
May	232.99 ± 31.92 <sup>a</sup>	28.08 ± 1.73 <sup>a</sup>
June	219.53 ± 48.25 <sup>b</sup>	27.29 ± 3.64 <sup>a</sup>
July	228.35 ± 26.17 <sup>a</sup>	27.73 ± 2.56 <sup>a</sup>
<b>Owena River</b>		
April	208.00 ± 57.17 <sup>c</sup>	28.01 ± 2.10 <sup>a</sup>
May	234.68 ± 58.19 <sup>a</sup>	27.96 ± 2.65 <sup>a</sup>
June	155.36 ± 20.20 <sup>d</sup>	27.06 ± 1.90 <sup>a</sup>
July	212.47 ± 31.22 <sup>b</sup>	26.84 ± 2.14 <sup>a</sup>

170 Means with different alphabet superscript represent significant level at P is ≥5% within the column. n =  
 171 120.

172

##### 173 3.1.2 Regression Analysis

174

175 The regression analysis of the length (cm) and weight (g) of fish from the two Rivers were  
 176 revealed in Figure 1 and 2. Frequency of occurrence of fish, mean and standard deviation on  
 177 standard length (cm) and weight (g) of all fish samples collected; Condition Factor (K),  
 178 regression coefficient (R<sup>2</sup>), coefficient of determination (r), and isometric values (b) of fish  
 179 were determined, (Table 2).

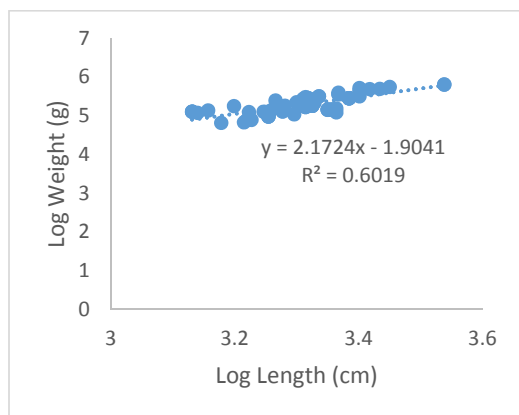


Figure 1. Regression of *Clarias gariepinus* collected from Ogbese River.

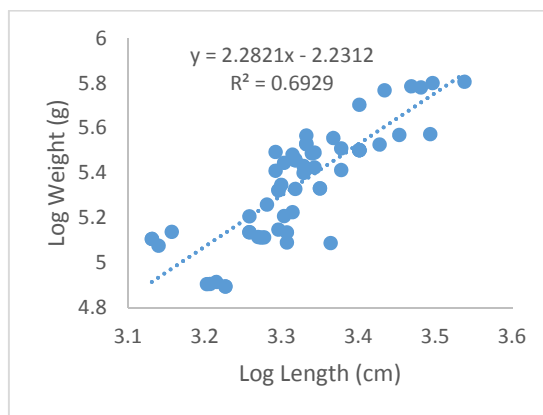


Figure 2. Regression of *Clarias gariepinus* collected from Owena River.

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183 **Table 2. Growth Parameters Determined on *Clarias gariepinus* Collected from**  
 184 **Ogbese River and Owena River.**

FreshWater Environments→	Ogbese River	Owena River
<b>Growth Parameters↓</b>		
Frequency of Occurrence	60	60
Mean Standard length (cm)± standard deviation	27.58± 0.32	27.86± 0.68
Mean Weight (g) ± standard deviation	205.34± 2.24	217.26± 2.74
Condition Factor (K)	0.98	1.00
Regression Coefficient (R <sup>2</sup> )	0.60	0.69
Coefficient of Determination (r)	0.78	0.83
Isometric Value (b)	2.17	2.28

185

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187

### 188 3.2 Parasite Occurrence in *Clarias gariepinus* Samples Collected

189 Parasites highest occurrence(64.58 %) inOgbeseRiver occurred in *Dactylogyrus speciewith*  
 190 232.49 prevalence;Gyrodactylus species ranked highest (61.32) in occurrence and 220.75  
 191 prevalence in Owena River. Tables 3 and 4 showed frequency and prevalence of parasites  
 192 occurrence on *C. gariepinus* from the two environments.Figure 3 showed prevalence of  
 193 parasites in male and female samples of *C. gariepinus*in both environments over the  
 194 experimental period.

195 **Table 3: Frequency, Percentage Occurrence and Prevalence of Parasitic fauna in**  
 196 ***Clariasgariepinus* from Ogbese River and OwenaRiver**

Parasites	Ogbese River			Owena River		
	Frequency	% Occurrence	Prevalence	Frequency	% occurrence	Prevalence
<i>Ambiphrya spp.</i>	4	4.17	15.01	0	0.00	0.00
<i>Camallanus spp.</i>	6	6.25	22.50	6	2.83	10.19
<i>Capillaria spp.</i>	0	0.00	0.00	36	16.98	61.13
<i>Chilodonella spp.</i>	14	14.58	52.49	0	0.00	0.00
<i>Dactylogyrus spp.</i>	62	64.58	232.49	12	5.66	20.38
<i>D. latum</i>	10	10.42	37.69	10	4.72	16.99
<i>Gyrodactylus spp.</i>	0	0.00	0.00	130	61.32	220.75
<i>P. symphysodonis</i>	0	0.00	0.00	18	8.49	30.56
Total	96	100.00	360.00	212	100.00	360.00

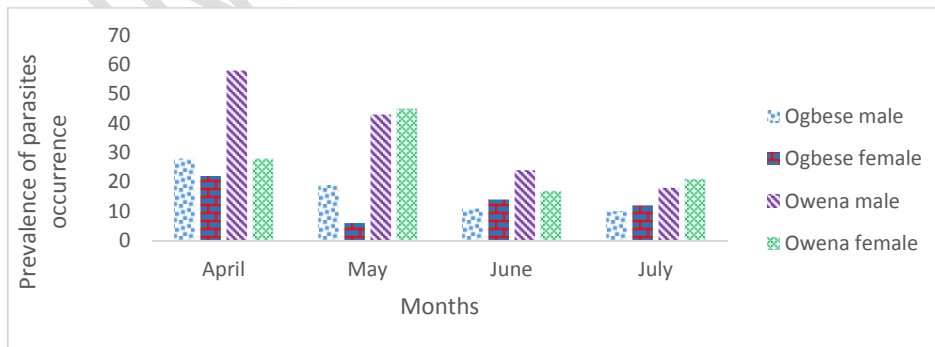
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199 **Table 4: Monthly Frequency of Occurrence and Percentage Occurrence of Parasites**  
 200 **Infestation in *Clariasgariepinus* from Ogbese River and Owena River**

Month	Frequency of Occurrence of Parasites in OgbeseRiver	Percentage Occurrence in Ogbese (%)	Frequency of Occurrence of Parasites in OwenaRiver	Percentage Occurrence in Owena (%)
April	30	31.25	74	34.91
May	24	25	65	30.66
June	24	25	40	18.87
July	18	18.75	33	15.56
Total	96	100	212	100

201



202

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**Figure 3: Prevalence of parasites in Male and Female *Clariasgariiepinus* from Ogbese River and Owena River in**

205

206 Prevalence (%) and comparative parasitic fauna recovered of parasite in fish organs revealed  
 207 parasites occurred most in the gills and intestines, and least in skins of *C.gariiepinus* fish  
 208 samples from Ogbese River and Owena River (Tables 5 and 6).

209

210 **Table 5: Prevalence (%) of Parasites in Intestines, Gills and Skins of *Clariasgariiepinus***

Parasite	Ogbese River			Owena River			Total
	Intestine	Gills	Skin	Intestine	Gills	Skin	
<i>Ambiphrya spp.</i>	0.00	4.17	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.17
<i>Camallanus spp.</i>	6.25	0.00	0.00	2.83	0.00	0.00	9.08
<i>Capillaria spp.</i>	0.00	0.00	0.00	16.98	0.00	0.00	16.98
<i>Chilodonella spp.</i>	0.00	0.00	14.58	0.00	0.00	0.00	14.58
<i>Dactylogyrus spp.</i>	0.00	64.58	0.00	0.00	5.66	0.00	70.24
<i>D. latum</i>	10.42	0.00	0.00	4.72	0.00	0.00	15.14
<i>Gyrodactylus spp.</i>	0.00	0.00	0.00	61.32	0.00	0.00	61.32
<i>P. symphysodonis</i>	0.00	0.00	0.00	8.49	0.00	0.00	8.49
Total	16.67	68.75	14.58	94.34	5.66	0.00	200

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212

213 **Table 6: Comparative Parasitic Fauna Recovered in Organs (intestine, gills and skin)**  
 214 **of *Clariasgariiepinus* in Ogbese River and Owena River**

Parasitic species	River		Part/Location		
	Ogbese	Owena	Intestine	Gills	Skin
<i>Ambiphrya spp.</i>	+	-	-	+	-
<i>Camallanus spp.</i>	+	+	+	-	-
<i>Capillaria spp.</i>	-	+	+	-	-
<i>Chilodonella spp.</i>	+	-	-	-	+
<i>Dactylogyrus spp.</i>	+	+	-	+	-
<i>Diphyllobothrium spp.</i>	+	+	+	-	-
<i>Gyrodactylus spp.</i>	-	+	-	+	-
<i>Protoopalina spp.</i>	-	+	+	-	-

215 *spp.*: Species; + Present; - Absent

216

217 Figures 4 and 5 showed percentage infestation of parasites on *C. gariiepinus* from Ogbese and  
 218 Owena Rivers. *Dactylogyrus spp.* ranked highest in Ogbese River, while *Gyrodactylus spp.*  
 219 ranked highest in Owena River.



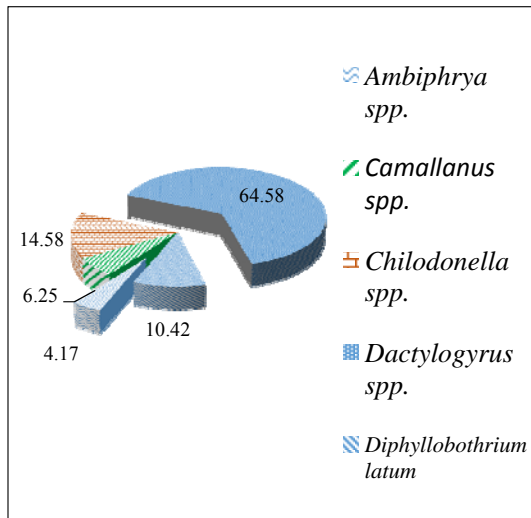


Figure 4: Percentage Infestation in *Clarias gariepinus* from Ogbese River

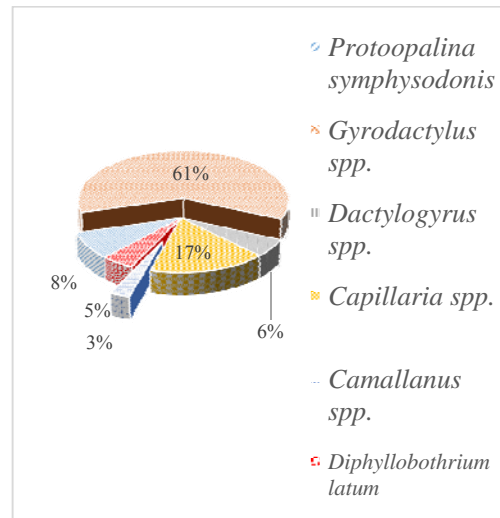


Figure 5: Percentage Infestation in *Clarias gariepinus* from Owena River

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223 Taxonomy and classification with site of recovery of parasitic fauna in *C. gariepinus* is  
 224 indicated in Table 7; and plates 1 – 8 showed the parasitic fauna pictorially.

UNDER PEER REVIEW

**Table 7: Taxonomical Classifications and Sites of Recovery of Parasitic Fauna Recovered in *Clariasgariiepinus* Fish Samples**

Parasites	Taxonomical group or classification							Site of Recovery	Type of parasite
	Kingdom	Phylum	Class	Order	Family	Genus	Species		
<i>Ambiphrya</i>	Animalia	Protozoa	-	Sessilida	Ambiphridae	<i>Ambiphrya</i>	-	Gills	Ectoparasite
<i>Camallanus</i>	Animalia	Nematoda (roundworms)	Secernentea	Camallanida	Camallanidae	<i>Camallanus</i>	<i>lacusris,</i> <i>truncatus</i>	Intestine	Endoparasite
<i>Capillaria</i>	Animalia	Nematoda	Adenophrea	Trichurida	Capillaridae	<i>Capillaria</i>	Multiple spp. e.g. <i>hepatica</i>	Intestine	Endoparasite
<i>Chilodonella</i>	Protista	Ciliophora	Phyllopharyngea	Cyrtophorida	Chilodonellidae	<i>Chilodonella</i>	<i>Uncinata</i>	Skin	Ectoparasite
<i>Dactylogyrus</i>	Animalia	Trematoda (Platyhelminthes)	Monogenea	Monopisthocotylea	Dactylogyridae	<i>Dactylogyrus</i>	<i>extensus</i>	Gills	Ectoparasite
<i>Diphyllbothrium</i>	Animalia	Platyhelminthes	Cestoidea	Pseudophyllidea	Diphyllbothriidae	<i>Diphyllbothrium</i>	<i>latum</i>	Intestine	Endoparasite
<i>Gyrodactylus</i>	Animalia	Trematoda (Platyhelminthes)	Monogenea	Monopisthocotylea	Gyrodactylidae	<i>Gyrodactylus</i>	<i>salaris</i>	Gills	Ectoparasite
<i>Protoopalina</i>	Chromista	Heterokontophyta	Opalineae	Opalinida	Opalinidae	<i>Protoopalina</i>	<i>symphysodonis</i>	Intestine	Endoparasite

**PLATES SHOWING RECOVERED PARASITES IN *Clariasgariiepinus* FROM OGBESE RIVER AND OWENA RIVER**

A total of eight (8) parasites recovered in the intestine, on the gills and skin of *Clarias gariepinus* comprised of two ectoparasitic protozoans (*Ambiphrya* spp. and *Chilodonella* spp.), one endoparasitic protozoan (*Protoopalinasymphysodonis*), two monogenean trematodes (*Dactylogyrus* spp. and *Gyrodactylus* spp.), two nematodes (*Camallanus* spp. and *Capillaria* spp.) and cestode (*Diphyllobothrium latum*).

The parasites recovered in *Clarias gariepinus* catfish samples from Ogbese River and Owena River are as shown below, (Plates 1 - 8).



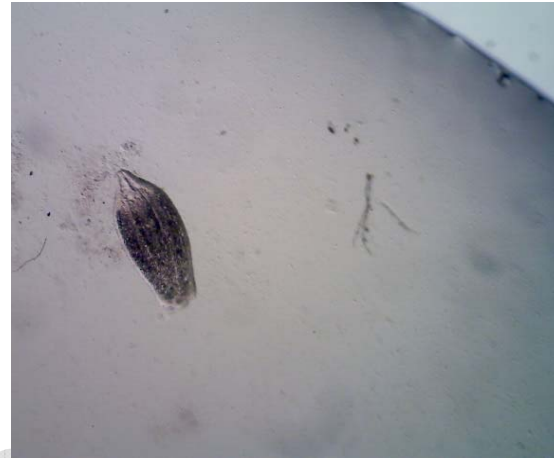
**Plate 1: Protoopalinasymphysodonis in the intestine of Clarias gariepinus (Mg. 400X)**



**Plate 2: Diphyllobothrium latum in the intestine of Clarias gariepinus (Mg. 400X)**



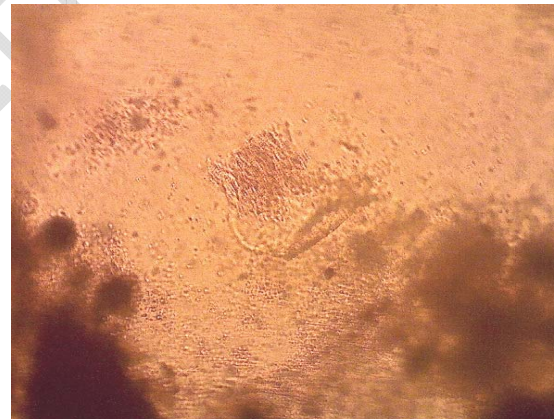
**Plate 3: Gyrodactylus spp. on the gills of Clarias gariepinus(Mg. 400X)**



**Plate 4: Dactylogyrus spp. on the gills of Clarias gariepinus(Mg. 400X)**



**Plate 5: Capillaria spp. in the intestine of Clarias gariepinus(Mg. 400X)**



**Plate 6: Ambiphrya spp. on the gills of Clarias gariepinus(Mg. 400X)**



**Plate 7: Chilodonella spp. on the skin of Clarias gariepinus(Mg. 400X)**



**Plate 8 Camallanus spp in the intestine of Clarias gariepinus(Mg. 400 400X)**

#### **4. DISCUSSION**

##### **4.1 Parasites Recovered**

The condition factor for all the fish samples (*Clarias gariepinus*) collected from both Rivers were less than one which indicated that the living aquatic environment for the fishes were not conducive. Parasitic fauna in and on wild *Clarias gariepinus* is made up of myriads of parasitic and pathogenic organisms. These organisms are in their own individual ways of more or less economic and health importance for the fish and humans.

A total of eight (8) parasites recovered in the intestine, on the gills and skin of *Clarias gariepinus* belong to different *phyla*; Protozoa, Nematoda, Ciliophora, Trematoda and Heterokontophyta. The parasites comprised of two ectoparasitic protozoans (*Ambiphrya spp.* and *Chilodonella spp.*), one endoparasitic protozoan (*Protoopalinasympphysodonis*), two monogenean trematodes (*Dactylogyrus spp.* and *Gyrodactylus spp.*), two nematodes (*Camallanus spp.* and *Capillaria spp.*) and one cestode (*Diphyllobothrium latum*).

The effects of parasites on fish hosts in the wild may be difficult to quantify because the aquatic environment is constantly polluted from different sources (Mastanet. *al.*, 2009). *Ambiphrya* spp and *Protoopalinasympphysodonis* occurred in very small percentages when compared to total parasitic percentage; this may indicate possibility of the parasites naturally existing at a negligible level in wild *Clarias gariepinus*. *Camallanus* spp nematode has negative health effect on fish with high infestation. *Dactylogyrus* spp and *Gyrodactylus* spp had high prevalence while *Diphyllobothrium latum* (broadfish tapeworm) had negative health implications on fish and humans (the end-users of fish and fish products), causes human *Diphyllobothriosis* (Scholz *et.al.*, 2009).

A total of one hundred and twenty (120) live fish samples (*Clarias gariepinus*) were examined, and seventh - eight (78) fish samples were infested with parasites, giving a prevalence of 65%. The frequency of parasite infestation including the percentage intensity in *Clarias gariepinus* from the two natural water bodies. Table 4 revealed higher parasite prevalence in Owena River than Ogbese River. And more parasites were recovered in fish samples from Owena River than Ogbese River. Occurrence of intestinal parasites *Diphyllobothrium latum* corroborated Biu and Akorede, (2013) who reported helminth infections as quite common in wild fish. Infestation rates vary greatly from one area to another. Previously work by Bichi and Yelwa, (2010) is in line with the findings as he reported such infestation in Northern Nigeria. Overall infestation rate (65%) obtained depicted high infestation when compared to 16.6% reported from Asa River at Ilorin. This may be due to the fact that definitive host amongst others determine to a large extent the rate of infection (Obano *et.al.*, 2010).

Rate of parasites infestation differed with sex of fish in the study, male fish had higher parasites occurrence than female. This may be as a result of differential feeding either by quantity or quality of food or as a result of different degrees of resistance to infestation. However, this contradicts Biu and Akorede, (2013) who reported that variations in parasitic infestation among the sexes of fish studied were not significant implying that higher infestation rates in either male or female were simply by chance. In addition, the occurrence of parasites in *Clarias gariepinus* may be indicative of similar diets, feeding habits and patterns among the freshwater fishes. The pathological effects of helminths recovered are as a result of the mechanical damage caused by the attachment organs.

Owena River revealed higher frequency and percentage prevalence parasite infestation on *C. gariepinus* fish samples than Ogbese river samples over experimental months (Figures 1 and 2). The parasites recovered were found majorly in intestine and on gills but to a lesser extent on

skin. Ectoparasites recovered include *Ambiphryaspp*, *Chilodonellaspp*, *Dactylogyrusspp* and *Gyrodactylus spp*. Endoparasites recovered include *Protoopalinasymphysodonis*, *Diphyllobothrium latum*, *Capillaria spp*. and *Camallanus spp*. Of the endoparasites identified in the course of this research work, *Capillariaspp* and *Diphyllobothrium latum* were very common. *Ambiphryaspp* and *Protoopalinasymphysodonis* only occurred in very small percentages (Table 7) when compared to the whole. *Camallanuspp* nematode a serious negative health effect on fish but only in the case of high infestation.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Fish parasites cause commercial losses in both the fisheries and aquaculture industries. Different parasite species affect fisheries by decreasing the yield, reducing the quality of fish or rendering them aesthetically unacceptable. Hence, affecting human health and socio-economic implication.

Inferences from this study revealed endo parasites and ecto-parasite fauna identified in wild *Clariasgariepinus* consisted of pathogenic and non-pathogenic organisms. These organisms are in their own individual of more or less economic and health importance for the fish, other organisms and humans. However, parasite occurrence should not be neglected because its increasing population in fish environment will be problematic and create public health menace.

Therefore, control of parasites should be looked upon as a major aspect of management in fish production. Proper processing and culinary methods should also be put in place to reduce transmission of parasites within aquatic environment and for public health purposes.

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