A Descriptive Study to Assess the Knowledge and Practice of Non-Medical Students Regarding Hepatitis B Infection in a Selected College in Surat

Novina Rao Ponnuru
Professor, Sri Shanmugha College of Nursing, Salem, Tamil Nadu.

Abstract: **This study aimed to assess the knowledge and practices of non-medical students regarding Hepatitis B infection. The conceptual framework was based on Jean Watson's Theory (1979). A convenience sampling technique was employed to select 50 participants. Data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, chi-square tests, and Z-tests. Findings revealed that the majority of non-medical students exhibited poor knowledge but good practices concerning Hepatitis B infection.**

INTRODUCTION

Hepatitis B is often referred to as a silent killer, receiving less attention than HIV awareness campaigns. Young individuals aged 18 to 23 account for 71% of all identified cases, highlighting the severity of the issue among the youth. Hepatitis B is easily and dangerously transmitted through direct contact with infectious agents, even in the absence of visible injuries, increasing vulnerability to potentially life-threatening infections. Recent lifestyle changes in India, driven by rapid economic growth, have significantly affected young people, leading to the acceptance of practices such as pre-marital sex, multiple sexual partners, homosexuality, and drug addiction, particularly to heroin. These behaviors are direct risk factors for Hepatitis B, HIV, and various sexually transmitted diseases. Systematic and practical health education is essential to combat this alarming trend, necessitating coordination between governmental and non-governmental organizations to develop and implement effective health policies.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

"A Descriptive Study to Assess the Knowledge and Practice of Non-Medical Students Regarding Hepatitis B Infection in a Selected College in Surat."

Definitions:

- Hepatitis B: Injury to hepatic cells with infiltration of inflammatory cells caused by the hepatitis B virus.
- Knowledge: Acquaintance with facts and truths about Hepatitis B regarding its presence, diagnosis, and treatment.
- Non-Medical Students: First, second, and third-year BBA students at a selected college in Surat.

OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the knowledge of non-medical students regarding Hepatitis B infection.
2. To assess the practices of non-medical students regarding Hepatitis B infection.
3. To determine the correlation between knowledge and practices of non-medical students concerning Hepatitis B infection.
4. To examine the association between knowledge and practices of non-medical students regarding Hepatitis B infection relative to their demographic variables.

HYPOTHESES

- H0: There is no significant difference in the knowledge and practices of non-medical students regarding Hepatitis B infection.
- H1: There is a significant difference in the knowledge of non-medical students regarding Hepatitis B infection.
- H2: There is a significant difference in the practices of non-medical students regarding Hepatitis B infection.
- H3: There is a significant association between the knowledge and practices of non-medical students regarding Hepatitis B infection and their selected demographic variables.

Demographic Variables: Age, Gender, Eating Habits, and Primary Source of Information among non-medical students.

SETTING OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted at METAS Adventist College, Surat.

POPULATION

The population for this study consists of non-medical students.

SAMPLE

The sample comprised first, second, and third-year BBA students aged 18-23.

SAMPLE SIZE

The total sample size for the study was 50 BBA students.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

A stratified random sampling technique was employed.

SAMPLING CRITERIA

Inclusion Criteria:

1. Non-medical students willing to participate in the study.
2. Non-medical students aged 18-23 years.
3. Non-medical students who can read and write in English.

Knowledge levels were categorized based on a structured questionnaire:

- Adequate Knowledge: 75% and above
- Moderate Knowledge: 50-74%
- Inadequate Knowledge: 49% and below

The level of practice was categorized as follows:

- Good Practice: 50% and above
- Poor Practice: 49% and below

FINDINGS

Section I: Demographic Factors of Non-Medical Students Regarding Knowledge and Practices on Hepatitis B Infection

Table I: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Non-Medical Students According to Selected Demographic Factors (N=50)

(N=50)

S.NO	DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS	NURSING STUDENTS	
		FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
1.	Gender		
	Male	28	56
	Female	22	44
2.	Age		
	18-20 Years	14	28
	20-22 Years	35	70
	22-24 Years	01	02
	24 Years & Above	00	00
3.	Source of information.		
	Television	08	16
	Newspaper	01	02
	Internet	04	08

	All the above	37	74
4.	Eating habits		
	Home	06	12
	Outside	07	14
	Occasionally outside	37	74

The majority of non-medical students were male (28, 56%), while females constituted the minority (22, 44%). Of the participants, 14 (28%) were aged 18-20 years, 35 (70%) were 20-22 years, and 1 (2%) were 22-24 years. In terms of information sources, 8 (16%) reported using television, 1 (2%) used newspapers, 4 (8%) used the internet, and 37 (74%) obtained information from multiple sources. Regarding eating habits, 6 (12%) primarily ate at home, 7 (14%) ate outside, and 37 (74%) occasionally ate outside.

Section II: Knowledge of Non-Medical Students Regarding Hepatitis B Infection

Table II: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Non-Medical Students in Relation to Their Knowledge Regarding Hepatitis B Infection (N=50)

(N=50)

S.NO	LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE	NURSING STUDENTS	
		FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1.	ADEQUATE (75% & above)	13	26%
2.	MODERATE (50% - 74%)	10	20%
3.	INADEQUATE (49% & below)	27	54%

The data indicate that 13 (26%) of non-medical students had adequate knowledge, 10 (20%) had moderate knowledge, and 27 (54%) had inadequate knowledge regarding Hepatitis B infection.

Section III: Practice of Non-Medical Students Regarding Hepatitis B Infection

Table III: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Non-Medical Students in Relation to Their Practices Regarding Hepatitis B Infection (N=50)

(N=50)

S.NO	LEVEL OF PRACTICE	NURSING STUDENTS	
		FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1.	Good (50% & above)	45	90%
2.	Poor (49% & below)	05	10%

The results reveal that 45 (90%) of non-medical students demonstrated good practices, while only 5 (10%) exhibited poor practices regarding Hepatitis B infection.

Section IV: Association Between Knowledge and Practice of Non-Medical Students Regarding Hepatitis B Infection

No significant association was found between the knowledge and practices of non-medical students regarding Hepatitis B infection and their selected demographic variables; thus, the H3 hypothesis was rejected.

IMPLICATIONS

- Effective prevention of Hepatitis B infection among young adults aged 18-23 years.
- Promotion of efficient Hepatitis B control measures among youth, encouraging them to adopt advanced practices in infection control.
- Enhancements in information dissemination and practice standards regarding Hepatitis B infection among young people.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Non-medical students demonstrated inadequate knowledge regarding Hepatitis B infection.
2. Non-medical students exhibited good practices concerning Hepatitis B infection.
3. There was no significant association between the knowledge and practices of non-medical students regarding Hepatitis B infection and their selected demographic variables.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop and implement comprehensive educational programs targeting non-medical students to increase awareness and knowledge about Hepatitis B, including modes of transmission, prevention strategies, and vaccination benefits.
2. Create and distribute informative brochures, posters, and digital content that outline essential facts about Hepatitis B, emphasizing prevention and the importance of vaccination.
3. Partner with local health organizations and NGOs to facilitate health camps that provide free vaccinations and screenings for Hepatitis B, making these services accessible to students.
4. Consider integrating topics related to Hepatitis B and other communicable diseases into the college curriculum, ensuring that students receive consistent and thorough education on public health issues.
5. Promote safe practices among students, including the importance of safe sexual

REFERENCES

Books

[1] Lewis, S. L., Collier, I., & Heitkemper, M. M. (2011). *Medical Surgical Nursing* (7th ed.). Mosby Publishers.
[2] Brunner, L. S., & Suddarth, D. S. (2012). *Textbook of Medical Surgical Nursing* (12th ed.). Wolters Kluwer Publishers.
[3] Kumar, P., & Clark, M. (2016). *Clinical Medicine* (9th ed.). Elsevier.

Journals

[4] Alavi, M., & Ramesh, K. (2017). "Knowledge and Attitude of College Students towards Hepatitis B: A Cross-Sectional Study." *Journal of Community Medicine & Health Education*, 7(4), 1-5.
[5] Sharma, A., & Singh, R. (2020). "Hepatitis B Awareness and Vaccination Status among Young Adults." *International Journal of Medical Science and Public Health*, 9(2), 215-220.
[6] Mistry, N., & Joshi, S. (2018). "Hepatitis B Awareness in Young Adults: A Review." *Indian Journal of Public Health Research & Development*, 9(5), 345-348.

Web References:

[7] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2022). "Hepatitis B." Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hbv/index.htm
[8] MedicineNet. (2022). "Hepatitis B." Retrieved from https://www.medicinenet.com/hepatitis_b/article.htm
[9] World Health Organization (WHO). (2021). "Hepatitis B." Retrieved from https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/hepatitis-b