

Comparative Study of In-School Adolescents in Government Secondary Schools and Out-of-School Adolescents on Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices of Hepatitis-B Prevention in F.C.T Abuja: Lugbe as a Case Study

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ABSTRACT

Background: Hepatitis B virus (HBV) is a significant public health issue in Nigeria, with an HBV prevalence of 8–12% and despite the availability of an effective and safe vaccine, vaccination and screening rates for adolescents remain suboptimal, as observed during this study. The knowledge, attitudes, and preventive practices (KAP) associated with HBV prevention were assessed and compared between in-school and out-of-school adolescents in Lugbe, Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja.

Methods: This was a comparative cross-sectional study involving 198 adolescents (99 in-school and 99 out-of-school adolescents) in Lugbe and was selected using a multi-stage sampling model, and data were collected using a structured, self-administered questionnaire based on the WHO Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice (WHO KAP) survey method. The data were analyzed using IBM Statistical Package for Social Science version 25, descriptive and inferential statistics (independent samples t-tests and Chi-square tests) with a 5% significance level and 95% confidence interval.

Results: The participants were almost equally shared by sex (52% were male and 48% female respondents). The mean knowledge score was 3.58 ± 2.99 , and only 52% of the respondents expressed good knowledge of HBV transmission and prevention. The Attitude scores averaged 16.49 ± 3.82 , with the out-of-school adolescents having more positive attitudes towards HBV prevention ($t = -3.58$, $p < 0.001$). Preventive practice level was low, with about 9.6% respondents receiving all three doses of the HBV vaccine and reporting ever being tested for HBV. Differences in knowledge ($p = 0.129$) and practice ($p = 0.634$) between the groups were not statistically significant, while the attitude difference was significant ($p < 0.001$).

Recommendation: To close the space between knowledge and practice, policies must make the establishment of school-based vaccination programs important, and the establishment of community outreach programs that target both groups. These efforts must be introduced with public health campaigns that should be designed to dismiss false information and address financial and psychological barriers to vaccine uptake and increase awareness.

