



## ORIGINAL RESEARCH

### Viral Hepatitis B Infection among Undergraduate Students Accessing Health Services at Public Tertiary Institution in Kwara South, Nigeria

Bello SI\*<sup>1</sup>, Williams FE<sup>1</sup>, Aliyu FO<sup>1</sup>, Ojieabu WA<sup>2</sup> and Adewumi MA<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Clinical Pharmacy and Pharmacy Practice, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria. <sup>2</sup>Department of Clinical Pharmacy and Biopharmacy, Faculty of Pharmacy, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Shagamu, Nigeria.

#### Address for correspondence:

Dr. Shakirat I. Bello  
Department of Clinical Pharmacy and Pharmacy Practice, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.  
Email: sibello10@yahoo.com

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#### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Hepatitis B virus (HBV) has been a major public health concern causing above a million deaths worldwide. The disease can be averted by employing relevant screening programs and effectual vaccines.

**Objectives:** This research aimed to assess the occurrence and risk factors for infection of HBV among undergraduate students accessing health services at University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.

**Method:** A cross-sectional study was conducted between 15th February and 4th June, 2019. One hundred and eighty-one students were recruited and tested for Hepatitis B surface antigen (HbsAg) with the use of Micropoint Diagnostics Kit, Nantong, China. A validated questionnaire was used to capture information on socio-demographics and risk factors for infection of HBV of the consenting volunteers. Ethical approval with number UIL/UHS/TW was obtained. Statistical Package for Social Sciences was used to analyze the data collected for descriptive and inferential statistics.

**Results:** The mean age of the students was  $19.21 \pm 5.37$  years with the majority being females 110 (60.8%). Ten students tested positive for HBV giving an incidence rate of 5.5%. The age of the students showed a significant association with HBV positivity. Use of injectable illicit drugs and sharing of utensils were the behavioural risk factors that correlated with HBV infection.

**Conclusion:** The incidence rate of HBV disease was intermediate and the risk factors identified were age, use of injectable illicit drugs and sharing of utensils. Proper adherence to prevention and control measures coupled with efficient follow-up could decrease the occurrence of the disease.

**Keywords:** Students, Hepatitis B Virus, University of Ilorin, risk factors, occurrence