



FACULTY OF MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES

KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE, AND PRACTICE TOWARDS HEPATITIS B AMONG
UNIMAS UNDERGRADUATE NURSING STUDENTS

AT
UNIMAS

JOELIANA BINTI RAMLEE (69997)

Bachelor of Nursing with Honours

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JOELIANA BINTI RAMLEE (69997)

This project is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
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Grade: A

Please tick (☐)

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Masters

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This declaration is made on the 3rd day of October year

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Nursing students were at higher risk of acquiring Hepatitis B infection during clinical attachments. Therefore, comprehensive teachings and trainings were well-needed to improve the students' Hepatitis B preventive practices. **Objective:** To assess the level of knowledge, attitude, and practice towards Hepatitis B among UNIMAS undergraduate nursing students as well as to determine any correlation between knowledge, attitude, and practice among UNIMAS undergraduate nursing students. **Method:** It is a quantitative, descriptive cross-sectional study that use self-administered questionnaire to collect the data among a simple random sample of 146 student nurses. The data was analysed using Spearman Correlation test. **Result:** Most of the respondent's age range between 19 to 25 years old (M= 21.76, SD= ± 1.261). UNIMAS nursing students' knowledge of Hepatitis B was determined to be moderate with a mean score overall of 56.11 and a standard deviation of 5.888. The study discovered that half of the respondents (52.1%, n=76) have insufficient understanding on hepatitis B, whereas the other half (47.9%, n=70) have adequate knowledge. With an overall mean score of 9.86 and a standard deviation of 0.169, the attitude level towards Hepatitis B among UNIMAS nursing students was determined to be moderate. The majority of respondents (61.6%, n=90) had negative attitudes pertaining to hepatitis B, whereas just 38.4% (n=56) had positive attitudes. The researcher found that majority of the respondents has exhibits poor practices towards Hepatitis B (55.5%, n=81) meanwhile, only 44.5% (n=65) of them has a satisfactory practice level towards Hepatitis B. Levels of attitude and knowledge showed a weak but statistically significant positive correlate ($r=0.219$, $p=0.008$). The level of knowledge and level of practice did, however, show a moderate and statistically significant positive correlation ($r=0.450$, $p<0.05$). On the other hand, there was only a very weak correlation between attitude level and practise level ($p > 0.05$), which was not statistically significant. **Conclusion:** It can be stated that the majority of the UNIMAS undergraduate nursing students

scored in the middle range for both knowledge and practice. On the other side, UNIMAS undergraduate nursing students scored poorly on attitude items. Therefore, theoretical and practical instruction must be given concurrently in order for nursing students to receive enough knowledge and guidance in handling Hepatitis B patients in the clinical setting.

Keywords: *Knowlegde, attitude, practice, Hepatitis B, UNIMAS*

ABSTRAK

Pengenalan: Pelajar kejururawatan berisiko lebih tinggi untuk mendapat jangkitan Hepatitis B semasa penyertaan klinikal. Oleh itu, pengajaran dan latihan yang komprehensif sangat diperlukan untuk meningkatkan amalan pencegahan Hepatitis B pelajar. Objektif: Untuk menilai tahap pengetahuan, sikap, dan amalan terhadap Hepatitis B di kalangan pelajar kejururawatan sarjana muda UNIMAS serta untuk menentukan korelasi antara pengetahuan, tingkah laku, serta amalan di kalangan pelajar kejururawatan sarjana muda UNIMAS. Kaedah: Ia adalah kajian kuantitatif, deskriptif yang menggunakan soalan-soalan yang dikendalikan sendiri untuk mengumpul data di antara sampel mudah 146 pelajar jururawat. Data telah dianalisis menggunakan ujian korelasi Spearman. Hasil: Kebanyakan responden berusia antara 19 hingga 25 tahun ($M = 21.76$, $SD = \pm 1.261$). Pengetahuan pelajar keperawatan UNIMAS tentang Hepatitis B ditentukan sebagai moderat dengan skor purata keseluruhan 56.11 dan penyimpangan standard 5.888. Kajian itu mendapati bahawa separuh daripada responden (52,1%, $n = 76$) mempunyai pemahaman yang tidak mencukupi mengenai hepatitis B, manakala separuh yang lain (47,9%, $n=70$) mempunyai pengetahuan yang mencukupi. Dengan skor purata keseluruhan 9.86 dan penyimpangan standard 0.169, tahap sikap terhadap Hepatitis B di kalangan pelajar penjagaan UNIMAS ditentukan sebagai moderat. Kebanyakan responden (61.6%, $n=90$) mempunyai sikap negatif berkaitan dengan hepatitis B, manakala hanya 38.4% ($n=56$) mempunyai sikap positif. Penyelidik mendapati bahawa majoriti responden telah menunjukkan amalan buruk terhadap Hepatitis B (55.5%, $n=81$) manakala, hanya 44.5% ($n=65$) daripada mereka mempunyai tahap amalan yang memuaskan terhadap Hepatitis B. Tahap sikap dan pengetahuan menunjukkan korelasi positif yang lemah tetapi signifikan secara statistik ($r = 0,219$, $p = 0,008$). Walau bagaimanapun, tahap pengetahuan dan tahap amalan menunjukkan korelasi positif yang moderat dan signifikan secara statistik ($r=0.450$, $p<0.05$).

Di sisi lain, terdapat hanya korelasi yang sangat lemah antara tahap sikap dan tahap amalan ($p > 0.05$), yang tidak signifikan secara statistik. Kesimpulan: Ia boleh dinyatakan bahawa majoriti pelajar keperawatan sarjana UNIMAS mencecah dalam julat pertengahan untuk kedua-dua pengetahuan dan amalan. Di sisi lain, pelajar-pelajar keperawatan sarjana UNIMAS mendapat skor yang lemah pada item sikap. Oleh itu, arahan teori dan praktikal mesti diberikan secara bersamaan supaya pelajar penjagaan mendapat pengetahuan dan bimbingan yang mencukupi dalam menangani pesakit Hepatitis B dalam persekitaran klinikal.

Kata kunci: Pengetahuan, sikap, amalan, Hepatitis B, UNIMAS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION AND SYMBOLS

UNIMAS	Universiti Malaysia Sarawak
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
HBV	Hepatitis B virus
WHO	World Health Organization
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Chapter 1: Introduction

Section 1.0 Introduction

This study was conducted to assess the level of knowledge, attitude, and practice on Hepatitis B virus infection among UNIMAS undergraduate nursing students. This chapter consists of seven sub-section which are the background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, and then followed by definitions of study variable and summary of the study.

Section 1.1 Background study

Hepatitis B including other viral hepatitis, HIV and sexually transmitted infections pose serious risks to public health on a global scale. According to World Health Organization [WHO], (2021), they are responsible for more than 2.3 million deaths annually, or 14% of all fatalities including those diseases brought on by parasitic, infectious, digestive, and cancerous disorders. Therefore, The Global Health Sector Strategy (GHSS) for Viral Hepatitis, adopted by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2016, aims to eradicate viral hepatitis as a threat to public health by 2030 and provides motivation to step up efforts to combat the hepatitis B (HBV) and hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection epidemics. However, at 1.1 million cases per year, the number of fatal cases of hepatitis B and C worldwide is still alarming.

In Malaysia as well as other countries in the Asia-Pacific area, chronic hepatitis B virus infection is common (Wong et al., 2018). Additionally, cirrhosis, one of the complications of viral Hepatitis is the ninth most common main disease in Malaysia, whereas hepatocellular carcinoma is not only prevalent but also the deadliest malignancy (Global Burden of Disease, n.d.). Hepatitis B virus infection specifically attack the liver cells and potentially causing liver cancer and cirrhosis which can be fatal. The virus commonly transmitted through perinatal

transmission, exposure to an infected blood and bodily fluids, needle stick injury, contaminated needles, syringes or sharp objects and sexual intercourse with multiple partners.

It has been demonstrated that healthcare personnel are up to four times more likely to contract this infection than the public (Abiola et al., 2016). These further prove that Hepatitis B infection could be included in one of the occupational hazards in the healthcare setting (Lewis et al., 2015). These personnel may be at a higher risk of contracting the infection because of their lack knowledge of the Hepatitis B virus and adequate safeguards against blood-borne infections. Mbaisi et al., (2013) in their study found that despite the fact that all healthcare workers who interact with patients run the risk of exposure to blood and bodily fluids, nurses reported the most percutaneous injuries (50%) and splash exposures (40%) compared to other healthcare workers. This is because the nurses interact with patients more frequently and are more likely to handle sharp objects.

There are numerous of studies conducted to assess the factors affecting Hepatitis B preventive practices. A study by Reang et al., (2015) revealed that the lack of understanding about Hepatitis B is one of the concerns that should be taken seriously since it might result in negative behaviour with relation to exposure, prevention, and management of Hepatitis B. Therefore, as future nurses, the quality of education and training are impactful towards their Hepatitis B prevention practices.

Section 1.2 Statement of problem

Hepatitis B is a blood-borne infection in which it has been categorized as one of the occupational hazards in the hospital setting (Coppola et al., 2016). It also can lead to persistent infection and greatly increases the risk of cirrhosis and liver cancer-related mortality (WHO, 2022). The healthcare professionals such as doctors and nurses come into direct contact with patients, their blood, bodily fluids, and their surroundings when delivering treatments and care.

Therefore, they are susceptible to a number of health risks including Hepatitis B because of the nature of their profession (Chaudary et al., 2016). Besides, the risk factor of contracting Hepatitis B is likely to be associated with the constant exposure risk towards blood-borne infection along their lifetime profession (Muljono et al., 2018).

Mutually, as a healthcare trainee, the nursing students also do tasks in hospitals equally like some of the other healthcare professionals do, therefore they might be regarded as health care providers. As a result, they are also exposed to the same level of risk when caring for patients and handling contaminated equipment. In addition, the students are treated as a part of the team providing patients with medical treatment during their placements (Al-Mahmood et al., 2018). Additionally, due to their lack of knowledge and training in the clinical setting, the nursing students tend to breach the standard protocol when handling blood, body fluids and sharp items and acquire sharp injuries (Al-Redha and Majeed, 2017).

In a study done by Balegha et al., (2020), revealed that the low level of knowledge tends to exhibit poor Hepatitis B preventive practice. Whereas the viral hepatitis can only be prevented by optimal precautionary measures. To prevent the dissemination of these viruses, it is vital to have accurate knowledge as well as appropriate attitudes and behaviours (Ahmad et al., 2016). It is crucial that nursing students are informed and aware of this virus from the beginning because they will pursue this career in the future. Therefore, more awareness of Hepatitis B infection and prevention could result in a decrease in the risk and incidence of this potentially fatal virus among healthcare professionals, especially nursing students.

Section 1.3 Research Questions

1.3.1 What is the level of knowledge on Hepatitis B infection among UNIMAS

undergraduate nursing students?

1.3.2 What is the level of attitude on Hepatitis B infection among UNIMAS

undergraduate nursing students?

1.3.3 What is the level of practice on Hepatitis B infection among UNIMAS

undergraduate nursing students?

1.3.4 Is there any correlation between knowledge, attitude, and practice on Hepatitis B virus

infection among UNIMAS undergraduate nursing students?

Section 1.4 Research Objectives

1.4.1 To assess the level of knowledge on Hepatitis B infection among UNIMAS

undergraduate nursing students.

1.4.2 To assess the level of attitude on Hepatitis B infection among UNIMAS

undergraduate nursing students.

1.4.3 To identify the level of practice on Hepatitis B infection among UNIMAS

undergraduate nursing students.

1.4.4 To examine any correlation between knowledge, attitude, and practice on Hepatitis B

infection among UNIMAS undergraduate nursing students.

Section 1.5 Significance of study

The results of this study could be used to improve the knowledge, attitude, and behaviour of future health professionals as well as the public regarding Hepatitis B infection by encouraging health education initiatives such as organizing health talk and seminar. Besides that, this study would contribute to the body of literature since there are only a few scholarly articles on Malaysian knowledge, attitudes, and practice regarding hepatitis. Additionally, it would highlight the knowledge and attitude gaps about hepatitis that must be addressed among UNIMAS's nursing students. In addition, it will act as a foundation for future studies, such as

educational interventions, into the knowledge, attitudes, and practice of nursing students nationwide addressing hepatitis B.

Hence, this study offers empirical data that can aid infection control units in understanding the expertise, outlook, and behaviour of UNIMAS nursing students regarding Hepatitis B prevention practice. As a result, during their training in a hospital context, infection control units are able to decide whether the students need to be briefed on infection control and execute the proper control measures to keep them from acquiring Hepatitis B.

Section 1.6 Definition of terms

For a better understanding of this study, the following terms are defined:

Section 1.6.1 Hepatitis B

Hepatitis B is a potentially fatal liver infection brought on by the hepatitis B virus (HBV), which raises the risk of cirrhosis and liver cancer-related death and may result in persistent infection (WHO, 2022).

Section 1.6.2 Knowledge

Conceptual definition: Knowledge is defined as insight on a topic acquired via study or experience, whether known to one person or to the wider public (Cambridge dictionary, n.d.).

Operational definition: In this study, it refers to knowledge towards Hepatitis B which is measured using five questions with seven sub-sections under Hepatitis B modes of transmission and four sub-sections under Hepatitis B ways of prevention that were adapted from Srestha et al., (2020). Each item graded with 5-point Likert scale 5 (Strongly agree), 4 (Agree), 3 (Neutral), 2 (Disagree), and 1 (Strongly disagree). The total score for knowledge ranged from 14 to 70. Those who had a total score of 56-70 were considered to have sufficient knowledge, while those who received a score of less than 56 were considered to have insufficient knowledge.

Section 1.6.3 Attitude

Conceptual definition: Attitude is defined as a sentiment or viewpoint of conduct regarding something or someone (Cambridge dictionary, n.d.).

Operational definition: In this study, it refers to attitude towards Hepatitis B which is measured using seven questions about the attitude of the students regarding Hepatitis B adapted from AlHazmi et al., (2015). The questions will be answered as “Agree”, “Not sure”, and “Disagree” and scored as 2, 1 and 0. The total score for attitude ranged from 0 to 14. A positive attitude was seen to be demonstrated by those who scored 75% or more of the possible points (≥ 10), whereas a negative attitude was considered to be present in those scoring less than 75%.

Section 1.6.4 Practice

Conceptual definition: Practice is an action of actualizing a theory, concept, or practice (Cambridge dictionary, n.d.).

Operational definition: In this study, it refers to the practice towards Hepatitis B which is measured using four questions regarding prevention and control of Hepatitis B, including Hepatitis B vaccination and personal protective measures that were adapted from Srestha et al., (2020). Each item graded with 5-point Likert scale 5 (Strongly agree), 4 (Agree), 3 (Neutral), 2 (Disagree), and 1 (Strongly disagree). The total score for knowledge ranged from 0 to 20. A good practice was defined as achieving the total score of 16-25, while a poor practice was defined as achieving less than 16.

Section 1.6.5 Nursing students

Conceptual definition: A person who is engaged in a program for professional or vocational nursing is referred to as a nursing student (Law Insider, n.d.).

Operational definition: In this study, the nursing students referring to UNIMAS Year 1, 2, Year 3, and Year 4 undergraduate nursing students that have been attached in the clinical setting.

Section 1.7 Summary

This chapter discussed the study's purpose, which is to raise public awareness of occupational threats in hospitals and the severity of hepatitis B infection. Furthermore, the problem statements in this chapter also mention that Hepatitis B as one of the workplace hazards in the healthcare setting and the significant risk of infection exposures that nursing students and other healthcare professionals would experience, notably Hepatitis B. This chapter also includes the study objectives and research questions. Additionally, it has been underlined how crucial it is to carry out this study. The following chapter will include a review of the literature that is pertinent to this study.

Chapter 2: Literature review

Section 2.0: Introduction

This chapter discussed the literature review on the knowledge, attitude, and practice on Hepatitis B infection. The knowledge level towards Hepatitis B is presented in Section 2.2, the levels of attitude in Section 2.3, and the practice levels in section 2.4, and a summary of the literature review is presented in Section 2.3. The articles used in this literature review are from trusted sources such as Google Scholar and PubMed. The articles reviewed are retrieved from 2012 to 2022. This literature review excluded articles published for more than ten years and articles that did not mention the date of publication.

Section 2.1: Overview

Healthcare professionals are thought to be at higher risk for occupational diseases like Hepatitis B leads to the inclining mortality rate of Hepatitis B among the healthcare workers itself (WHO, 2022). Hence, Hepatitis B cases were found to prevalent among the healthcare workers including nurses, doctors, dentists, along with the others (Mahamat et al., 2021). The future nurses who are entrusted with fighting Hepatitis B and educating the public about its prevention are represented by nursing students. Nursing students itself must avoid contracting Hepatitis B during their practicum in hospital settings, thus it's critical that they have in-depth information, a positive outlook, and effective Hepatitis B infection control.

Section 2.2: Knowledge

The prevention of the spread of Hepatitis B infection depends critically on people having a thorough understanding of the disease. Lack of understanding could impede preventive measures and exacerbate the disease. There are studies that found a relatively high level of knowledge among their participants. For an instance, Reang et al., (2015) in their study revealed a result of high level of knowledge among the nursing students aged 22 and above