

Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices on Hepatitis B Viral Infection among Nursing Undergraduates in General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University

GDBDD Senadheera^{1#}, HHW Wedaarachchi¹, WMID Nakkawita², and UTN Senaratne³

¹Department of Nursing and Midwifery, Faculty Allied Health Sciences, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Sri Lanka

²Department of Paraclinical Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Sri Lanka

³Department of Medical Laboratory Sciences, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Sri Lanka

#deshikasenadeera97@gmail.com

Nursing students who are often exposed to various body fluids are more prone to contract and transmit Hepatitis B infection. This study determined knowledge, attitude and practices on HBV among nursing undergraduates. A cross-sectional study was conducted among 267 nursing students at Kotelawala Defence University. A self-administered questionnaire composed of four sections including participants' sociodemographic, knowledge, attitudes, and practices about HBV was used for data collection. Data were collected from the entire population of nursing undergraduates at KDU, Sri Lanka. The data was collected using a pre-tested modified self-administered questionnaire. Data entry and analysis was by SPSS 26 software. Employing descriptive statistics to summarize data and as inferential statistics, independent sample t test, One-way ANOVA test, and Pearson's correlation coefficient test were used to explore relationships between variables. The study population consisted of 65.9% (143) females and 65.4% (142) were in the 21-23 age group. A total of students expressed moderate level of knowledge 57.6% (125), attitudes 59.0% (128) and practices 68.7% (149). There was a weakly positive correlation ($r=0.033$) and no statistically significant relationship ($p=0.627$) between knowledge and practice. This study found a significant association between nursing students' knowledge and their study year ($p=0.022$), attitudes and ethnicity ($p=0.046$), as well as practices and age ($p=0.00$), practices and age, also with study year ($p=0.000$). Considerable gaps in nursing students' theoretical grasp of Hepatitis B and their safety practices were identified, highlighting the need for educational programs, workshops, and practical training to improve empathy, attitudes, and real-world clinical skills.

Keywords: *Hepatitis B virus, knowledge, attitudes, practices*