

Dynamics of Hepatitis B Infection Prevention Practices among Pregnant Women Attending Antenatal Care in Central Uganda Using the Constructs of Information-Motivation-Behavioral Skills Model: A Case of Lubaga Hospital Kampala

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Abstract : Background: Hepatitis B virus infection remains a significant global public health challenge with infectivity as well as the potential for transmission more than 50 to 100 times that of HIV. Annually, global HBV-related mortality is linked primarily to cirrhosis and liver carcinoma. The ever-increasing endemicity of HBV among children under-5-years, owing to vertical transmission and its lingering chronicity in developing countries, will hamper the global efforts concerted towards eliminating viral hepatitis as a global public health threat by 2030. Objective: This study assessed information motivation behavioral skills model constructs as predictors of HBV infection prevention practices among consenting expectant mothers attending antenatal care in Central Uganda as a focal point of intervention towards breaking materno-foetal transmission of HBV. Methods: A cross-sectional study with a quantitative data collection approach based on the constructs of the IMB model was used to capture data on the study variables among 385 randomly selected pregnant women between September and October 2020. Data derived from the quantitative instrument were transformed into weighted aggregate scores using SPSS version 26. ANOVA and regression analysis were done to ascertain the study hypotheses with a significance level set as ($p \leq 0.05$). Results: Relatively 60% of the respondents were aged between 18 and 28. Expectant mothers with secondary education (42.3%) were predominant. Furthermore, an average but inadequate knowledge ($\bar{X}=5.97 \pm 6.61$; $B=0.57$; $p<.001$), incorrect perception ($\bar{X}=17.10 \pm 18.31$; $B=0.97$; $p=.014$), and good behavioral skills ($\bar{X}=12.39 \pm 13.37$; $B=0.56$; $p<.001$) for adopting prevention practices all statistically predicted the unsatisfactory level of prevention practices ($\bar{X}=15.03 \pm 16.20$) among the study respondents as measured on rating scales of 12, 33, 21 and 30 respectively. Conclusion: Evidence from this study corroborates the imperativeness of IMB constructs in reducing the burden of HBV infection in developing countries. Therefore, the inadequate HBV knowledge and misperception among obstetric populations necessitate personalized health education during antenatal visits and subsequent health campaigns in order to inform better prevention practices and, in turn, reduce the lingering chronicity of HBV infection in developing countries.

Keywords : behavioral skills, HBV infection, knowledge, perception, pregnant women, prevention practices

Conference Title : ICSSRH 2022 : International Conference on Sexuality, Sexual and Reproductive Health

Conference Location : London, United Kingdom

Conference Dates : November 18-19, 2022